DOUBLE ISSUE THE LAST JOHN LENNON FILE

The Nation.

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Richard J. Evans

ABOUT FACE

THE GROWING ANTIWAR MOVEMENT IN THE MILITARY

by MARC COOPER

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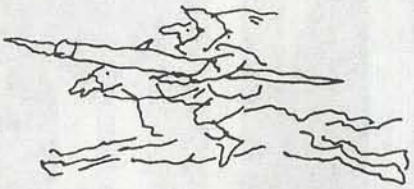
LETTERS



R.O. BLECHMAN

HEY, MISTER TRIANGLE MAN...

Westport, Conn.

■ Tom Flynn's letter about Robert Grossman's fine cartoon picturing Barack Obama playing the triangle among other celebrating Democrats ["Letters," Jan. 1] really rubbed me the wrong way. Flynn thinks that of all instruments, the triangle is "the most trivial one of all."

So I called my friend Billy Ware, who plays triangle professionally for the great Cajun and Zydeco band Beausoleil. Billy told me, "The triangle is humble with great musical virtue. It is also a fantastic groove machine." He mentioned that while European in origin, the triangle is featured prominently in Brazilian music. Billy also told me that Don Montucet, the premier triangle artisan in south Louisiana, made his triangles from the iron tines of a hay rake before agricultural technology changed. After skillfully bending the iron into a triangular shape, Don would curl the ends of the iron. This gives the iron triangle a lower and richer resonance than the steel orchestral triangle used in, say, the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra.

So, listen here. Don't trivialize the triangle! It's humble. It's virtuous. And completely cool in the hands of Barack Obama. CHRIS FRANTZ

Talking Heads & Tom Tom Club

LAND AIDS OR BAND-AIDS?

New York City

■ Alexander Cockburn doesn't appreciate what the Grameen Bank has accomplished ["The Myth of Microloans," Nov. 6]. Through its uncollateralized loans, the bank has helped millions of villagers acquire livestock, land and other assets, as well as half a billion dollars in savings. The bank has helped 650,000 villagers purchase homes, all of which must be legally registered in the wife's name. The bank is also owned by villagers, who elect nine of twelve positions on its board of directors. These changes are deeply subversive—which is why the bank has been harassed by the Bangladeshi government and been a target of opposition and violence from landowners, moneylenders, Muslim fundamentalists and socialists alike.

With loans millions of villagers have acquired such things as a tin roof, a vegetable garden and proper bedding and crockery, and have achieved year-round food stability. Many have also been able to send daughters to school. Cockburn should not dismiss advances like these; they make a big difference in people's lives. Moreover, deeper changes may be taking root. In the most recent national elections in Bangladesh, more women voted than men, and 18 percent of those elected to Union Parishad posts were members of the Grameen Bank or BRAC, the two largest microcredit programs.

Cockburn contends that the bank "places" its borrowers in debt. This is wrong. The bank would not have remained popular among villagers for more than twenty years if it were coercing or intimidating them. Poor people are not fools. When I interviewed Grameen borrowers who had faced cyclones and floods, they told me clearly that the bank was the key factor in their recovery. Without loans, they could not have repurchased assets to get back to work.

Microcredit is not a "neoliberal" or romantic idea. And nobody calls it a panacea. It is a valuable option that should be made widely available to the poor, along with many other options. Cockburn is right to argue for macro-level reforms. But villagers need reliable, respectful institutions like the Grameen Bank to help them with their daily struggles. DAVID BORNSTEIN

Author, The Price of a Dream: The Story of the Grameen Bank

Andhra Pradesh, India

■ Microloans cannot remove extensive poverty, but they have been a huge success. "Band-Aids," as Alexander Cockburn calls them, prevent immediate spread of infection. These stopgaps give people the chance to live and go the extra mile ("radical land reformers" know this). Cockburn disparages "Band-Aids" but also admits radicals get bullets in their heads. Inability to change the world doesn't mean inability to change your part of the world—and this is what Muhammad Yunus is doing. Microloans have prevented suicides. Mass suicides did not exist fifteen years ago. Corrupt governments, banks and agencies forced farmers to take loans and buy exorbitant supplies. Debts rose from 1,000 to 2,000 rupees to 75,000 to 100,000. Poor farmers borrowed from other poor farmers, who earned money laboring in cities. When the borrower committed suicide, his financier lost everything. Microloans help people think small initially. A decent buffalo and insurance can be bought for $130 through NGOs, which don't take cuts. Yunus and radicals fight the same evil. Don't run down Yunus. We have seen what microloans do, especially for women in the Third World. NANDITA SEN

Village Reconstruction Organization

New York City

■ As co-founder and executive director of Pro Mujer, a sixteen-year-old women's development and microfinance network that provides credit and training to 150,000 women in Latin America, I agree there is no quick fix for poverty; microfinance is not a panacea. It does not relieve governments of responsibility for providing health and educational services to citizens, nor is it a substitute for investments that yield jobs, benefits and a stable income. However, in the absence of adequate public services and private-sector investment, microloans go a long way toward helping women (the primary users of microfinance) to create their own jobs in the informal sector and improve the quality of life for themselves and their families.

Even greater benefits are possible depending on the microfinance institutions's (MFI) delivery system. For example, Pro Mujer organizes women in groups that meet weekly or biweekly to borrow and repay their loans. We link all clients with health services and negotiate affordable rates with quality providers. The overall impact of having a social support system, additional income and primary healthcare is profound but hard to quantify.

Pro Mujer has established five MFIs. Our interest rates are indeed higher than commercial banks, as it is costly to administer small loans and provide human development services (our average loan is $200). We consider ourselves a development organization that employs microfinance as a means to empower women, whose repayment rate is more than 99 percent and who use their additional income to keep their kids healthy and in school. There are many types of MFIs, from commercial banks to NGOs. As microfinance comes to be seen as a potential investment, it is important to stay true to the real bottom line: helping poor people improve their lives. LYNNE PATTERSON

COCKBURN REPLIES

Petrolia, Calif.

■ Let's first go to the basic question: Why microloans for poor people and macro-handouts for the rich? Is it that the poor just can't handle the excitement of getting a decent loan? In her letter, Lynne Patterson says it all: "microfinance is not a panacea. It does not relieve governments of responsibility for providing health and educational services to citizens, nor is it a substitute for investments that yield jobs, benefits and a stable income." So maybe give the Nobel Peace Prize to someone with a better idea than Yunus, who's a very appropriate hero for neoliberals.

I said that microloans can help, but that the hype is completely out of hand, as two of these letters attest. Take the claim that microloans have slowed farmer suicides. This is disgusting nonsense. The largest number of suicides have occurred in Andhra Pradesh, in regions thick with groups involved in such loans. Indeed, Andhra probably has more microloan groups than any other part of India. The largest and most important newspaper of Andhra Pradesh, *Eenadu*, has reported more than once on cases

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EDITORIALS

The Urge to Surge

So we've come to this: The lesson that George W. Bush seems to have extracted from the dramatic November elections, from the mounting national demand to start pulling out of Iraq, is to get us in ever deeper. The self-proclaimed "decider" has apparently decided to ignore the few common-sense recommendations of the Baker-Hamilton report, as well as the counsel of just about every other public voice in the foreign policy establishment, and instead wants to satisfy his urge to surge.

The President not only itches to "stay the course" but threatens to put the pedal to the metal and send another 20,000—or maybe 30,000—American troops to help secure Baghdad. No matter that the last time the United States flooded the Iraqi capital with troops it only produced more violence. No matter that every reasonable analyst has told him that the solution to the war in Iraq is political, not military.

The loudest sideline cheerleader for this reckless option is the candidate who hopes to replace Bush in 2008: John McCain. He argued on a recent trip to Baghdad that if US troops leave Iraq in chaos, groups like Al Qaeda "will follow us home." If the Beltway conventional wisdom is right—that McCain is merely staking out an "I told you so" position for his presidential run—his endorsement of the surge is even more contemptible.

We know what may be driving McCain in his support of a doomed policy, but what's the trouble with Harry? Appearing on *ABC This Week*, incoming Democratic Senate majority leader Harry Reid said he would "go along" with the President's proposed troop surge, so long as it was only for a few months and only if it led to eventual withdrawal. Fortunately, other Democratic voices—Senators Ted Kennedy, Jack Reed and Joe Biden, to name a few—immediately rebutted Reid. And while the Congressional Democrats are divided on the details of what to do next in Iraq, there's the creeping fear that, victims of excessive caution, they have squandered the weeks since the election. Too much time has been lost, too much hope was invested in the Baker-Hamilton report, and not enough has been done to articulate a clear, viable alternative to what's streaming from the White House.

The Democrats must remember that their midterm victory was a clear mandate from the American people not to waffle or to dawdle but to immediately reverse Bush's war policy. When the latest polls show three out of four Americans wanting troops out of Iraq, when former Secretary of State Colin Powell says more troops won't work, when our current military commanders, from John Abizaid and George Casey to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, have clearly signaled they're opposed to the surge, when Republican Senator Gordon Smith suggests the Iraq policy is "criminal," the Democrats have no choice but to be on the front line of calls for disengagement and withdrawal.

When the Democratic majority is formally seated in early January, it will be confronted with a sharp challenge. As Marc Cooper reports in these pages, there's a different kind of surge mounting in the military. Almost 1,000 active-duty soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen, rank-and-file enlistees as well as dozens of high-ranking officers, have signed a historic petition to Congress—what they call an Appeal for Redress—demanding that the troops be brought home. While their communication to Congress is protected by law, many of these active-duty troops, including some who still want to make the military their lifetime career, have taken the bold and risky step of standing up publicly to oppose the war. Can't comfortably elected Democrats do as much?

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COMMENT

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The Last Lennon File

After twenty-three years of litigation, on December 19 the FBI agreed to release the last ten documents in its file on John Lennon. The Bureau had withheld them on the grounds that they contained "national security" information and that releasing them could cause "military retaliation against the United States."

The Lennon FBI files, which I requested under the Freedom of Information Act in 1981, shortly after Lennon's murder, document the Nixon Administration's attempt to deport him from the United States after he said publicly that he planned to campaign against Nixon in the 1972 election.

The newly released documents contain only well-known information about Lennon's ties to New Left leaders and anti-war groups in London in 1970 and 1971. The information was provided by a foreign government, obviously Britain, whose name remains classified. These reports describe an interview with Lennon published in 1971 in the *Red Mole*, a London underground newspaper, in which, according to the document, "LENNON emphasized his proletarian background and his sympathy with the oppressed and underprivileged people of Britain and the world." Not exactly a national security threat—and not really secret; the interview was published in the United States as a cover story in *Ramparts* magazine under the title "The Working Class Hero Turns Red."

The documents, posted on the Internet at LennonFBIfiles.com, did contain one bit of information that had previously not been public: Lennon promised to help "finance the establishment of a left wing bookshop and reading room in London." It's hard to see any national security threat there.

The documents emphasize Lennon's ties to London New Left leaders Tariq Ali and Robin Blackburn, who were members of the International Marxist Group—again, not a secret. Today both are prominent intellectuals on the left. However, the British report concludes that Lennon had "apparently resisted the attempts of any particular group to secure any hold over him."

So in the end this turns out to be a story not about Lennon but about excessive government secrecy. These reports were withheld under the national security exemption to the Freedom of Information Act by four Presidents—Reagan, Bush I, Bush II and also, notably, Bill Clinton—whose Justice Department under Janet Reno had agreed to release all the other Lennon documents in 1997, but withheld these.

Why did four administrations fight in court to prevent the release of information that was already public? Why did it take twenty-three years of litigation by the ACLU of Southern California (and attorney Dan Marmalefsky of Morrison & Foerster, working pro bono) to get the government to concede that these weren't national security secrets, and that releasing them would not cause "foreign military retaliation"?

The answer, I think, has nothing to do with John Lennon. It has everything to do with the FBI and the Justice Department, and what they see as the principle they are defending: that they alone should define what constitutes a national security secret.

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They argued repeatedly in this case that the courts should defer to the FBI, which supposedly has expertise on national security that judges lack. The FBI and the Justice Department don't want the courts telling them they are wrong about what constitutes a national security secret—and they certainly don't want the ACLU telling them.

For the ACLU too, it's not just about John Lennon, it's also about a principle—but a different one: the principle of freedom of information. In a democracy, the government's information belongs to the people; the people have a right to know the information in government files—and the FBI and the Justice Department do not get the last word in deciding what to release and what to withhold. That's what the Freedom of Information Act says: It gives the people the right to appeal decisions to withhold documents; it gives federal judges the power to examine documents the FBI is withholding; and most important, it gives judges the power to order federal agencies to release documents they conclude have been improperly withheld. That's the principle at the heart of the FOIA, and it's at the heart of the Lennon FBI files case.

JON WIENER

Jon Wiener, a Nation *contributing editor, teaches history at the University of California, Irvine, and is the author of* Gimme Some Truth: The John Lennon FBI Files.

Get Carter

Jimmy Carter, by publishing his book *Palestine Peace Not Apartheid*, walked straight into the buzz saw that is the Israel lobby. Among the vitriolic attacks on the former President was the claim by Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League, that Carter is "outrageous" and "bigoted" and that his book raises "the old canard and conspiracy theory of Jewish control of the media, Congress, and the U.S. government." Many Democratic Party leaders, anxious to keep the Israel lobby's money and support, have hotfooted it out the door, with incoming House Speaker Nancy Pelosi announcing that Carter "does not speak for the Democratic Party on Israel."

Carter's book exposes little about Israel. The enforced segregation, abject humiliation and spiraling Israeli violence against Palestinians have been detailed in the Israeli and European press and, with remarkable consistency, by all the major human rights organizations. The assault against Carter, rather, says more about the failings of the American media—which have largely let Israel hawks heap calumny on Carter's book. It exposes the indifference of the Bush Administration and the Democratic leadership to the rule of law and basic human rights, the timidity of our intellectual class and the moral bankruptcy of institutions that claim to speak for American Jews and the Jewish state.

The bleakness of life for Palestinians, especially in the Gaza Strip, is a mystery only to us. In the current Israeli campaign in Gaza, now sealed off from the outside world, almost 500 Palestinians, most unarmed, have been killed. Sanctions, demanded by Israel and imposed by the international community after the Hamas victory last January in what were universally acknowledged to be free and fair elections, have led to the collapse of civil society in Gaza and the West Bank, as well as widespread malnutrition. And Palestinians in the West Bank are being encased, in open violation of international law, in a series of podlike militarized ghettos with Israel's massive $2 billion project to build a "security barrier." This barrier will gobble up at least 10 percent of the West Bank, including most of the precious aquifers and at least 40,000 acres of Palestinian farmland. The project is being financed in large part through $9 billion in American loan guarantees, although when Congress approved the legislation in April 2003, Israel was told that the loans could be used "only to support activities in the geographic areas which were subject to the administration of the Government of Israel prior to June 5, 1967."

But it is in Gaza that conditions are currently reaching a full-blown humanitarian crisis. "Gaza is in its worst condition ever," Gideon Levy wrote recently in the Israeli paper *Ha'aretz*. "The Israel Defense Forces have been rampaging through Gaza—there's no other word to describe it—killing and demolishing, bombing and shelling, indiscriminately.... How contemptible all the sublime and nonsensical talk about 'the end of the occupation' and 'partitioning the land' now appears. Gaza is occupied, and with greater brutality than before.... This is disgraceful and shocking collective punishment."

And as Gaza descends into civil war, with Hamas and Fatah factions carrying out gun battles in the streets, *Ha'aretz* reporter Amira Hass bitterly notes, "The experiment was a success: The Palestinians are killing each other. They are behaving as expected at the end of the extended experiment called 'what happens when you imprison 1.3 million human beings in an enclosed space like battery hens.'"

In fact, if there is a failing in Carter's stance, it is that he is too kind to the Israelis, bending over backward to assert that he is only writing about the occupied territories. Israel itself, he says, is a democracy. This would come as a surprise to the 1.3 million Israeli Arabs who live as second-class citizens in the Jewish state. The poverty rate among Israeli Arabs is more than twice that of the Jewish population. Those Israeli Arabs who marry Palestinians from Gaza or the West Bank are not permitted to get Israeli residency for their spouses. And Israeli Arabs, who do not serve in the military or the country's intelligence services and thus lack the important personal connections and job networks available to veterans, are systematically shut out of good jobs. Any Jew, who may speak no Hebrew or ever been to Israel, can step off a plane and become an Israeli citizen, while a Palestinian living abroad whose family's roots in Palestine may go back generations is denied citizenship.

The Israel lobby in the United States does not serve Israel or the Jewish community—it serves the interests of the Israeli extreme right wing. Most Israelis have come to understand that peace will be possible only when their country complies with international law and permits Palestinians to build a viable and sustainable state based on the 1967 borders, including, in some configuration, East Jerusalem.

This stark demarcation between Israeli pragmatists and the

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COMMENT

extreme right wing was apparent when I was in the Middle East for the *New York Times* during Yitzhak Rabin's 1992 campaign for prime minister. The majority of American Jewish organizations and neoconservative intellectuals made no pretense of neutrality. They had morphed into extensions of the right-wing Likud Party. These American groups, to Rabin's dismay, had gone on to build, with Likud, an alliance with right-wing Christian groups filled with real anti-Semites whose cultural and historical ignorance of the Middle East was breathtaking. This collection of messianic Jews and Christians, leavened with rabid American imperialists, believed they had been handed a divine or moral mandate to rule the Middle East, whether the Arabs liked it or not.

When Rabin, who had come to despise what the occupation was doing to the citizenry of his own country, was sworn in as prime minister, the leaders of these American Jewish organizations, along with their buffoonish supporters on the Christian right, were conspicuous by their absence. On one of Rabin's first visits to Washington after he assumed office, according to one of his aides, he was informed that a group of American Jewish leaders were available to meet him. The surly old general, whose gravelly cigarette voice seemed to rise up from below his feet, curtly refused. He told his entourage he did not have time to waste on "scumbags." CHRIS HEDGES

Chris Hedges, a senior fellow at The Nation Institute, is the author of War Is a Force That Gives Us Meaning *(Anchor). His new book,* American Fascists: The Christian Right and the War on America, *was published this month by the Free Press.*

'We Got To Do Better'

My latest guilty pleasure is an independent website called hotghettomess.com. I turn to it whenever I am fed up with the Serious Debate on African-American Personal Responsibility taking place among black writers, academics and politicians and the entertainment crowd that mingles among them. There are no big-time black intellectuals to be found on hotghettomess, no policy wonkery tricked out in hip-hop meter as favored by University of Pennsylvania professor Michael Eric Dyson. No, at hotghettomess you get the nitty-gritty version of the debate.

But before you go clicking over to it, be forewarned: It is not for the faint of heart. And before you look, a primer is in order: The nature of the debate (*aka* "How Come We Still Have Millions of Blacks Mired in Poverty and Self-Destructive Behaviors?") is best described as complex and enervating, centered as it is on a slippery mix of history, cultural beliefs, institutional inequities, politics and values.

The Serious Debate is not new; Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois clashed over it, as have Black Panthers and civil rights activists and comedians like Richard Pryor, Chris Rock, Sinbad and Dave Chappelle—most recently, in the last case, over blacks' use of the word "nigger." Whites have chimed in too, notably former Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, who caught hell from all sides in the 1960s by suggesting that the notion of black personal responsibility had a role in the public-policy debate over welfare. Throughout, the debate's rhetorical contours most closely resemble a snake eating its own tail.

Overwhelmingly, its highest-profile combatants are men. Most recently these have included Bill Cosby and journalist Juan Williams, who argue that more black Americans must step up their games, i.e., take better care of their children, focus on education, be willing to take low-rung, entry-level jobs. Their seemingly socially conservative message is not directly at odds with the traditional, moral-suasive, government-aided approach. Yet it is perceived as "blaming the victim" by a segment of black commentators and academics who might be seen as representing "the street."

In 2004 Cosby got up at a *Brown v. Board of Education* fiftieth anniversary event in Washington's Constitution Hall and delivered a rambling tirade about how today's "low-income" blacks have failed to live up to the promise and ideals of the civil rights generation. In response, Dyson unleashed a tome called *Is Bill Cosby Right? Or Has the Black Middle Class Lost Its Mind?* In the book and subsequent public appearances and op-ed articles, Dyson purported to out Cos as a bougie Old Fart who blames poor blacks for institutional inequalities beyond their control. Late last summer, Dyson and Williams engaged in verbal fisticuffs on a National Public Radio program about blacks, in the wake of the Hurricane Katrina disaster. Williams, who has positioned himself as Cosby's chief sympathizer and defender, is the author of a book titled *Enough: The Phony Leaders, Dead-End Movements, and Culture of Failure That Are Undermining Black America—and What We Can Do About It.* Listening to their exchanges on that NPR broadcast of *Talk of the Nation* gave me a headache. In the end, both men had plugged their respective books. But it was hard to tell if any valuable information got through to listeners.

I don't doubt their sincerity; I simply think it is worth questioning whether large male egos will continue to smother in the cradle a more productive approach. Certainly the assignment editors and bookers who continually give them airtime seem unable or unwilling to encourage discussion of what should be the core of this debate: the elusive internal spark that must be found, nurtured and fired up before "personal responsibility" can lift anyone up.

CALVIN TRILLIN

A New Policy for Iraq

The new plan may be bold, we're being told.
It's daring thought the White House now recruits.
Will Feith and Wolfowitz and Perle be asked
For bold ideas? They're bound to have some beauts.

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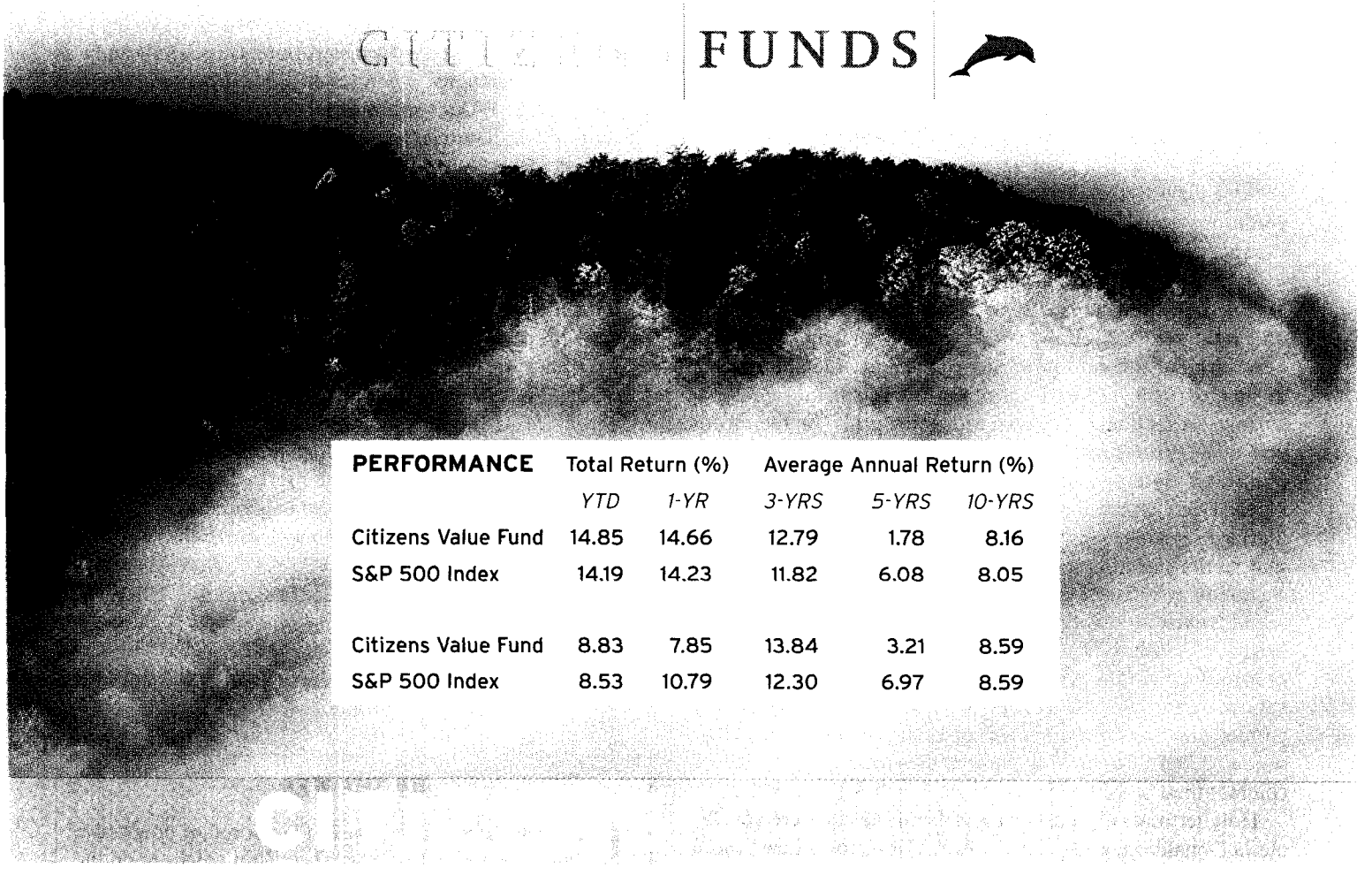

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	YTD	*1-YR*	*3-YRS*	*5-YRS*	*10-YRS*
Citizens Value Fund	14.85	14.66	12.79	1.78	8.16
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COMMENT

To be sure, there are a few more reasoned calls for a new approach, including by black male intellectuals like Chicago publisher Haki Madhubuti and Duke cultural studies professor Mark Anthony Neal. Neal argues in his 2005 book *New Black Man: Rethinking Black Masculinity* that the classic image of the "strong black man," an image of stoicism and emotional imperviousness internalized by blacks and subscribed to by whites as well, may in fact be detrimental to positive change in black communities. But such voices rarely get much attention.

Black women—we who increasingly outpace black men in the workplace and in schools, and who experience in real time the dismal results of black self-hatred and poor self-image, particularly among our men—know that the current discussion fails to unpack the more feminine elements of the personal responsibility debate, namely, most black men's inability to admit emotional or psychological vulnerability. The stigmas surrounding displays of "weakness" are deeply entrenched in many black Americans' generational history; they are linked closely to the notions of "respect" and "being hard" that inhibit many a black man's chances of improving his lot. Women understand this, but other than Oprah, who is regularly derided as a New Age Mammy, few black women writers or intellectuals are included in these high-decibel discussions. The general tone of the conversation, then, characterized by male posturing and duels at twenty paces, leaves many of us feeling marginalized.

By contrast, at hotghettomess, there is little verbiage but lots of tragicomic images of unnamed black Americans from undereducated, sartorially challenged "low-income" communities around the nation. In snapshots and video clips from nightclubs, backyard barbecues, street corners and salons, we see image after image of blacks with gold "grills" on their teeth and mile-high lacquered hair, unsmiling men in flamboyant pimp-style clothing and black children unashamedly performing their best approximation of stripperesque dance moves popularized on some rap videos. The photos and video clips are sent to the site from around the nation and, in a nod to the class-trumps-race school of thought, the site includes a section called "token whites" that features whites engaging in "ghetto" behavior: snapshots of pink Caucasian babies with liquor bottles propped in their tiny laps and white women who have taken the trouble to get some "GhetToes"—the two- or three-inch-long painted and bejeweled toenails apparently sprouting from the sandaled feet of a growing number of women in low-income communities.

Hotghettomess is a *cri de coeur* from the site's creator, Jameela Donaldson, a 33-year-old black Georgetown Law School graduate and DC native. The site's subhead, by the way, is "We Got To Do Better." On its homepage, Donaldson makes an impassioned plea for a return to common sense, self-respect and greater civic involvement among blacks. She refrains from naming names. Donaldson is acutely aware of the longstanding black mindset that says we shouldn't air our "dirty laundry" to the wider world, but she presses on anyway: "I am just holding up a mirror to my community, so don't blame me if you don't like the reflection," Donaldson writes. She adds, "Yes, I know there is racism, there is inequality of opportunity, gross disparities in education and health care. But...BECAUSE there are all these things it is even more imperative that we look inward and strengthen our communities ourselves."

A recent fellow at the DC Legal Aid office focusing on housing issues, Donaldson told me she conceived the website a few years ago after reaching a psychic and spiritual low point owing in part to her work. "Victimhood is absolutely killing us," Donaldson told me. "But so is class inequality and racism. We still need large-scale movements and the civil rights models, but at the same time if you say, 'Damn, can't we all just use common sense when it comes to respecting ourselves and raising our children properly?' you get called a neocon or worse."

On hotghettomess, Donaldson wisely lets the site's visitors contemplate the existential question beneath the black personal responsibility debate: Is this really who we are? And if not, how do we reorder our collective values and spark up that elusive element, the self-love that is dormant in so many of us?

Donaldson, who comes from a working-class family and was educated in Washington public schools, does not profess to have all the answers. When I spoke with her in October, she told me she put up hotghettomess as an attempt to reach the next generation of blacks. "It is a confusing mess out there for a lot of black people, even the so-called middle class," she said. "I want the site to inspire people"—to spark self-recognition and snap them out of their inertia. She gets thousands of hits daily, she says, but adds, "I don't expect to change the world with this, but I felt that maybe the Internet is a place to reach lots of [younger] people, and people who feel as I do."

As I click through the laugh-to-keep-from-crying images found on hotghettomess, it occurs to me that Donaldson is taking the increasingly omnipotent media machine and girling it up in an effort to get at a damnably tough problem. The images are not abstractions, Donaldson says, not formulas or theories; they are our brothers and sisters. If we can't muster the common sense, courage and compassion to meet them where they live, what does that say about us? AMY ALEXANDER

Amy Alexander, the author, with Alvin F. Poussaint, MD, of Lay My Burden Down: Unraveling Suicide and the Mental Health Crisis Among African-Americans *(Beacon), is writing a book on race and the American press.*

ON THE WEB

John Nichols draws up a year-end honor roll of progressive activists, groups and officials. Dave Zirin weighs in on the basketbrawl in Madison Square Garden, recommending that Knicks and Nuggets coaches and the NBA commissioner be benched. Jeremy Brecher and Brendan Smith look forward to efforts in the coming year to rein in the President's abuse of executive power and to prosecute Administration officials for war crimes. Christopher Hayes explores what the new Congress must do to end earmarks. And Rebecca Solnit takes the long view—looking back on the past year from 2025 (www.thenation.com).

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ACTUAL LETTER FROM A COLLEGE GRADUATE TO HIS MOTHER CONCERNING LEGAL AND ILLEGAL DRUG USE*

November 15, 2006

Dear Mom,

It has been eight years since I entered high school on the heels of your famous advice about drugs: "Johnny – be skeptical and, most of all, be safe." Although I'd like to tell you that I never needed your advice because I never encountered drugs, I'd prefer to be as honest with you as you have been with me

Just as you predicted, I spent high school and college navigating a highly experimental teenage drug culture. While some of the substances that I encountered were illegal, like marijuana, cocaine, and Ecstasy, many were not, like alcohol, cigarettes, and Ritalin. Because you explained that a drug's legality does not mean that it is better or worse for me, I approached every substance with skepticism, moderation and common sense.

Our household mantra of 'safety first' guided me through a maze of difficult decisions, particularly in college where alcohol use and abuse is widespread. Because you didn't lie or exaggerate the risks of drug use, I took your warnings seriously. I always made plans for sober transportation; I refused to leave friends alone if they were highly intoxicated; and I was never afraid to call home if I found myself in a dangerous situation.

Of course you advised me not to use drugs, but as an expert in the field, you knew that I was likely to experiment. Most parents panic in response to this likelihood, but you and Dad remained levelheaded: You didn't impose rigid rules that were bound to be broken, and you didn't bombard me with transparent scare tactics. Instead you encouraged me to think critically and carefully about drug use. When I inquired, you armed me with truthful, scientifically based information from which I could make my own decisions. This was excellent practice for adulthood, and we built a loving relationship based on trust and truth.

Mom, your work does so much more than teach parents how to talk to their kids about drugs; your work keeps parents and kids communicating at a time when most kids shut their parents out. Our relationship is a perfect example. For never ceasing to communicate with me, even when I tried to shut the door on you, and for tirelessly keeping me, my sisters, and so many other kids safe, thank you.

Common Sense for Drug Policy
www.CommonSenseDrugPolicy.org www.DrugWarFacts.org
www.ManagingChronicPain.org www.MedicalMJ.org
www.TreatingDrugAddiction.org
info@csdp.org

* Above is an unedited, unsolicited letter to Marsha Rosenbaum, Ph.D. from her son John.

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ERIC ALTERMAN

And the Beat Goes On...

The Race Beat, by Gene Roberts and Hank Klibanoff, is one of those remarkable works of history that make you see your own times more clearly. Subtitled *The Press, the Civil Rights Struggle, and the Awakening of a Nation*, the book tells the story of how the press, after ignoring the issue for so long, played a crucial role in awakening Americans to the evil—and heroism—in their midst.

One of the great mysteries of American history—one that will never be fully solved—is why the North failed to acknowledge and protest Southern apartheid for so long. Gunnar Myrdal addressed this question in his seminal 1944 study, *An American Dilemma*, and explained, "A great many Northerners, perhaps the majority, get shocked and shaken in their conscience when they learn the facts." Therefore, he added, "*To get publicity is of the highest strategic importance to the Negro people*" (italics in original).

"One of the secrets of the success of segregation," the authors of *The Race Beat* explain, "had been the way newspapers had neglected it." Before the marches and the violence of the civil rights era began, Southern newspapers "treated Negro communities as a creepy corner of the world not worthy of their readers' time" (and once the clashes erupted, most of them would side with the murderous mobs, distorting the news accordingly). Few Northern newspapers, meanwhile, had correspondents assigned to the South, and those reporters who did cover the South were not on the race beat. Both influential and symbolic was the *New York Times*, whose correspondent, Virginia scion John Popham, arrived in Chattanooga in 1947, the year Jackie Robinson joined the Dodgers, and proceeded to miss story after story. For instance, he reassured readers in the immediate aftermath of the Emmett Till murders that white Mississippians viewed the killing "with sincere and vehement expressions of outrage." It was nonsense, but not so much as the unprecedented 50,000-word, eight-page *Times* special section on the region that managed to miss the story that would dominate coverage of the South for the coming decade.

Part of the Northern press's initial problem derived from a syndrome that will prove familiar to those who witnessed the MSM's misleading reporting about prewar Iraq, when reporters and their editors by and large passed along the views of the Bush Administration and its allies. Just as Judith Miller took stenography for Scooter Libby and Ahmad Chalabi, Northern reporters, editors and opinion-makers spent their time having brandy and cigars with the kinds of sources with whom they felt personally and socially comfortable. "Enlightened" Southern editors, especially Arkansas's Harry Ashmore and Mississippi's Hodding Carter Jr., sold them a Chalabi-like dream of steady, nonviolent progress that belied the violent savagery that lay in wait for those who stepped out of line. *The Race Beat* notes that both Ashmore and Carter were "endlessly chatty and charming," and represented the kind of opinion and civic leaders that Northerners hoped to find in the South. As a result, these two relatively progressive gentlemen "soon found themselves frequently invited onto the national stage not as liberal dissenters in the South but as moderate defenders of the South, willing to go forth in the North and tell everybody to lay off." In fact, when the protests came, these well-spoken moderates represented only themselves. Indeed, to most white Southerners, they were considered race traitors for consorting with the Northern enemy. (Socializing with actual black people would have been out of the question.) "The North didn't want to hear from editors who were at heart white supremacists or implacable segregationists because they only proved how wide the gap was, how intractable the problem was," the authors explain. Had members of the Northern media been able to shake off their own political and social preconceptions, they might have opened their eyes earlier to the unfolding story being reported in such marginal sources as the *Baltimore Afro-American*, whose reporters risked life and limb to cover beatings, lynchings and the like.

Once the heroic civil rights resisters got going, however, numerous news organizations rose to the occasion of what was to become the most dramatic story in America since the end of the Second World War. The *Times* distinguished itself by replacing Popham with Claude Sitton, a young Atlanta native pulled from the copy desk by managing editor Turner Catledge whose brave and energetic reporting provided the paper with some of the proudest moments in its history. Still, the *Times*, while an industry leader, serviced an elite audience. Undoubtedly, it was the raw, often violent footage on television that moved the most American hearts and minds. During the events of March 1965 in Selma, Alabama, ABC interrupted its Sunday Night Movie—I kid you not, *Judgment at Nuremberg*—to show viewers Sheriff Clark instructing his minions to "get those goddamned niggers" before the ensuing police riot decimated the peaceful protesters asking for nothing more than the right to vote.

While "the race beat" eventually came to represent one of American journalism's finest hours, it is interesting to note that much of the best reporting demanded that the rules of objectivity be tossed out the window. *Washington Post* publisher Philip Graham even arranged for a phone call in which the *Arkansas Gazette*'s Ashmore appealed to Deputy Attorney General William Rogers to urge immediate intervention by President Eisenhower to ameliorate the violence in Little Rock. Meanwhile, old habits died hard. CBS ended up firing correspondent Howard Smith for his refusal to treat the Southern mobs and the nonviolent protesters as moral equivalents—to report the story, as Smith described CBS's attitude, that "truth is to be found somewhere between right and wrong, equidistant between good and evil."

Finally, though the authors don't make this connection, it's easy to see the origins of Southern Republican hatred of the national media—particularly the *Times*. After all, things were just fine down South before those liberal Northern reporters started stirring things up, weren't they? ■

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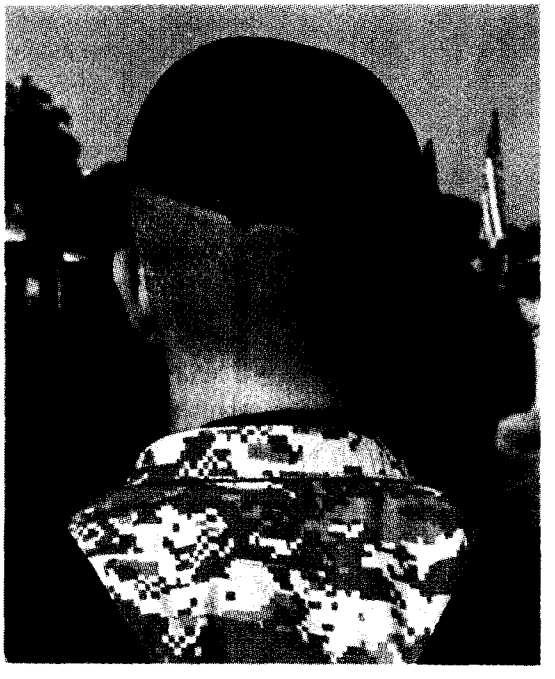
ARTICLES

ABOUT FACE

THE GROWING ANTIWAR MOVEMENT IN THE MILITARY



by MARC COOPER

Mark Dearden chooses his words with extreme precision. And not just with the deliberateness of a 36-year-old with a BA from Brigham Young, an MA in public health from Tulane and an MD from George Washington University. Dearden is also an active-duty lieutenant commander in the Navy who joined in 1997 and is still considering the possibility of a lifetime military career. "So this was a very difficult decision for me to come to," he says in a quiet, thoughtful voice. "I don't take this decision lightly."

Nor should he. Just a few weeks ago Dearden took the dramatic step of signing a petition to Congress—what's being called by its organizers an Appeal for Redress—opposing the war in Iraq and calling for the withdrawal of US troops. When the Appeal is delivered to Capitol Hill in mid-January, all the names of its almost 1,000 uniformed endorsers will be seen by members of Congress, if they care to look. But with his *Nation* interview, Dearden is now going public. And while the military cannot take reprisals against those who have supported the Appeal, many of the signers agree that there are an infinite number of ways they can be punished, including internal evaluations, denial of promotions and harsh assignments or postings. "I'm expressing a right of people in the military to contact their elected representatives, and I have done nothing illegal or disrespectful," says Dearden, now an anesthesiology resident at the Naval Medical Center in San Diego. After two tours in Iraq attached to a Marine battalion, including participation in the initial 2003 invasion, Dearden says that signing the Appeal gave him "closure" on what he describes as very tough deployments. "It gave me peace," he says.

Dearden has indeed joined the most significant movement of organized and dissident GIs seen in America since 1969, when 1,366 active-duty service members signed a full-page ad in the *New York Times* calling for an end to the Vietnam War. The Appeal for Redress, surfacing only in late October, has taken anti–Iraq War sentiment that's been simmering within the ranks and surfaced it as a mainstream plea backed by the enormous moral authority of active-duty personnel. It's an undeniable barometer of rising military dissent and provides a strong argument that the best way to support the troops is to recognize their demand to be withdrawn from Iraq. While clearly inspired by the GI movement of the Vietnam era, it takes a much different tack. Instead of attacking or confronting the military, as the resistance movement of the 1960s often did, the Appeal works within the military's legal framework.

The Appeal was posted as a simple three-sentence statement on a website managed by a Navy seaman:

As a patriotic American proud to serve the nation in uniform, I respectfully urge my political leaders in Congress to support the prompt withdrawal of all American military forces and bases from Iraq. Staying in Iraq will not work and is not worth the price. It is time for U.S. troops to come home.

The Appeal comes as the natural culmination of previous flickerings of military discontent with official Iraq policy. The bogging down of the war, along with the Bush Administration's use of a "backdoor draft"—the extension of tours of duty and an unprecedented call-up of active and inactive reserves—has stoked the discontent. Two years ago, some two dozen Army reservists refused to carry out a supply mission in Iraq, complaining that their vehicles were unsafe. Twenty Florida National Guard members petitioned their commanders to bring the troops home. In Kansas, Army reserve family members collected 8,000 signatures on a website protesting extended tours. While figures are difficult to confirm, counselors at the GI Rights Hotline estimate that as many as 1,000 or more troops and reservists go AWOL every month, not wanting to serve in Iraq. About 200 to 300 have fled to Canada, according to military rights lawyers. And in a half-dozen or so high-profile cases, uniformed personnel are facing court-martial and jail for refusing deployment to Iraq.

Therein resides the power of the Appeal for Redress. Its signers don't marginalize themselves as lawbreakers, resisters or deserters. Potential signers have been assured they are sending a communication to Congress protected under the Military Whistleblower Protection Act and will not be subject to reprisal. The result has been electrifying. In the two months since it surfaced, almost three times as many people have signed it as are members of the two-year-old Iraq Veterans Against the War. Almost three-quarters of the signers are active duty (the rest are reserves), and include several dozen officers, of whom a handful are colonels.

Interviews with more than two dozen signers, both in Iraq and on domestic US military bases from Fort Stewart in the

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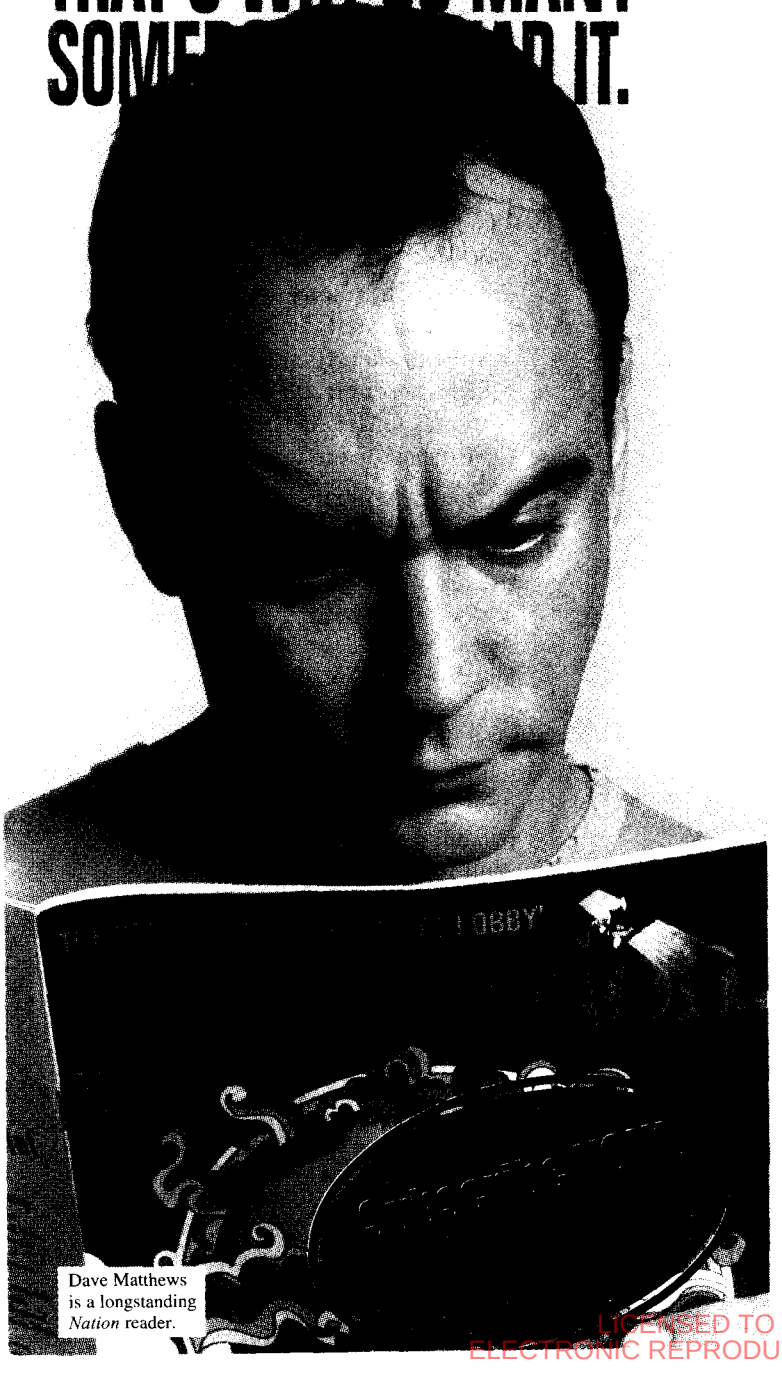

Dave Matthews is a longstanding *Nation* reader.

east to Hawaii's Hickam Air Force Base, reveal a movement that includes low-level grunts and high-ranking officers, as well as a rich diversity of racial, economic and educational backgrounds. The signers offered a variety of motivations—ideological, practical, strategic and moral—but all agreed the war was no longer worth fighting and that the troops should be brought home. As the debate on Iraq sharpens in the wake of the Baker-Hamilton report and as a new Democratic Congress is seated, the collective voice of active-duty opponents of the war is likely to add considerable clout to the antiwar movement.

This Martin Luther King holiday weekend, members of the Appeal will appear on Capitol Hill to formally present the petition to Congress to press their case. For an all-volunteer force, says Eugene Fidell, president of the National Institute of Military Justice, "it's simply unprecedented."

The genius of the Appeal resides not only in its simplicity but also in its nonconfrontational tone. "This is not about resistance. This is about working inside the democratic process," says lawyer J.E. McNeil, who helps run the GI Rights Hotline and who has helped advise the Appeal organizers. "This is about being proud of being a soldier, an airman or a marine, about being proud of your duty without giving up your rights as a citizen."

This was certainly the attraction for Dearden and for many other signers interviewed. "I love the military," Dearden says. "I was thrilled to find this legal outlet for what I felt. If more active duty knew there were legal and respectful ways to make their opinion known, they would eagerly join."

The inspiration to create the Appeal came to 29-year-old Seaman Jonathan Hutto earlier this year while he was floating off Iraq on the aircraft carrier Theodore Roosevelt. Born into an Atlanta family of civil rights activists, a former student body president at Howard University, and someone who had worked with Amnesty International and the ACLU, Hutto was not the most typical of Navy enlistees when he joined up in 2003. But with $48,000 in student loans to pay off and with a young child to support, he thought the Navy would be a "good transition."

As the war in Iraq worsened, Hutto felt he could no longer maintain his silence. He had an impeccable service record, having been named "sailor of the quarter" among his junior enlisted shipmates. But he had to do something to come out against a war he thought immoral and unnecessary. That's when one of his former professors sent him a thirty-year anniversary copy of *Soldiers in Revolt* by David Cortright. Now a Notre Dame professor and one of America's leading peace activists, Cortright wrote his book as a chronicle of the 1960s GI movement he helped to found. "The title alone just hit me," says Hutto, as we talk in a Washington-area coffeehouse, on a day he's off duty from his Norfolk base. "This was all new to me. And I got to thinking, What's to prevent active-duty folks from doing the same sort of thing right now?"

Hutto immediately contacted Cortright and started talking over the idea of the Appeal with a few close friends. Last June Hutto organized a Friday night screening of the antiwar docu-

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mentary *Sir! No Sir!* at the local YMCA just off the Norfolk naval base. Filmmaker David Zeiger's documentary reconstructs the GI movement of the Vietnam era. Cortright came as guest speaker and found a receptive crowd of about seventy-five.

One of those who attended the talk was 22-year-old Liam Madden, who had joined the Marines in 2002. "I was visiting a friend in Norfolk and thought we were going to a bar," he remembers. Instead, his buddy took him to the YMCA event and they caught the last half of Cortright's speech. Madden had already completed an Iraq tour in Anbar province with an all-reserve unit and had come back disillusioned with the war. "If anything, it convinced me that no tangible results could be achieved in Iraq," he says. "No one was safer. No one was happier because we were there."

Hutto, Madden, Cortright and a few others moved ahead with the idea of the Appeal. On October 29 Hutto published an op-ed piece announcing it in the *Navy Times*. Three days earlier the Appeal had appeared on the Web.

"Amazing," is how Cortright describes the chain of events that grew out of that YMCA meeting. "That encounter alone was one of the most fascinating moments of my last thirty-five years," he says over lunch in Washington. "Even I wasn't prepared for the depth and intensity of feeling against this war by so many active-duty members. I'm stunned. It's been moving so fast we can barely think it through."

'I am opposed to our brave men and women dying every day for nothing because we cannot control this civil war.' —an Army Major

Cortright sees an enhanced if not central political role for the rising active-duty movement. "They have been there and seen it, seen the disaster," he says. "It's much more real for them than for others in the peace movement. MoveOn and other groups got focused on the election while vets, families and active-duty folks are still suffering the burdens of the war." He adds, "Some of our liberal friends will again soon start focusing on the '08 election. So these active-duty folks over the next two years could become a key force in pushing for withdrawal."

The most compelling voices among the active dissenters who have signed the Appeal are those of troops still on the front lines in Iraq. Among them is a thirtysomething Army major, a Distinguished Military Graduate from a prestigious Southern university. Now on his second tour, "Major Frank," as I will call him, was first deployed to Baghdad just weeks after the 2003 invasion. "I believed wholeheartedly in the mission to oust Saddam Hussein," he says, "and would have been proud to die liberating Iraq from the evil dictator, because at the same time I felt I was protecting my country and my family [from] weapons of mass destruction."

Now, Frank says, he sees no point in the war, and no end. His Iraqi unit is 97 percent Shiite and is sympathetic to the extremist militia of fundamentalist cleric Muqtada al-Sadr. "We are merely being used as military pawns in a political struggle for Iraq," he says. "So, yes! I am opposed to our brave men and women dying every day for nothing because we cannot control this civil war."

Frank says he can pinpoint the precise moment when he turned against the war: last June 23. He was on patrol with his Iraqi unit when they came upon an illegal checkpoint set up by Sadr's Mahdi militia. The militants were using ambulances taken from the Ministry of Health to block the roads, thereby preventing American troops from maneuvering. He was flabbergasted when the Iraqi Army troops refused not only to take down the checkpoint but also returned to the militia a number of automatic weapons that had been seized from them by the army.

This sort of depressing reality is what prompted Frank to sign the Appeal. "I proudly joined the Appeal for Redress out of the sense of hopelessness that I had inside for what we are actually doing here," he says. He's angry with both the Bush Administration and the top brass in Iraq. "They sit behind their desks in the Green Zone and filter reports to their bosses. No one wants to admit that we are failing." Frank says he's quite open about his views, and finds overwhelming support for them among his fellow soldiers. "Yes, yes, yes," he says, "My entire team feels the same way I do. And the other battalion [trainers] that I have come across feel that way, including my commanders.... In fact, I have not had one person in the last five months disagree with me. The typical response is, 'I know what you mean.' "

That sentiment was, indeed, echoed by an Army officer and signer of the Appeal who wanted to be identified only by his real last name. Lieutenant Smith, a 24-year-old Kansan deployed with an infantry unit in Baghdad, joined up six years ago not only because he saw the military as a route to pay for college but also because he felt it was an obligation to "pay back" America for the opportunities it affords. His doubts about the war, strong from the beginning, only hardened. "I became very angry after two friends from college were killed, both in their 20s," Smith says. "I started to wonder what they had died for. Both were killed by roadside bombs near the area where my unit operates now. And when I found out about them before I deployed, my outlook changed. I started to lose any sense of satisfaction with what I was doing for the Army because what I was doing was in some roundabout way supporting what had just killed two friends."

Smith says it was his stateside father-in-law who directed him to the online Appeal. Smith had heard about another Army lieutenant, Ehren Watada, who has been resisting deployment to Iraq on the grounds that the war is unconstitutional and who now faces court-martial [see sidebar page 14]. But that was not a route he wished to travel. "I have an antiwar history from college," Smith says. "But I hate what Lieutenant Ehren Watada did and the way he did it. I wanted a way to say I thought the war was wrong without looking like a coward." At the same time, however, Smith says that he wants his voice to be heard. "I hope the Appeal will cement in the mind of Congress growing unrest about the war," he says. "Congress got a mandate from Americans that the war was not popular, and now they can get an official mandate from troops serving abroad that we feel the same way but are limited in the way we can express it."

Some within the ranks have been more outspoken about that discontent, mostly as a product of accelerated politicization and radicalization while in uniform. Take the case of 28-

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year-old Californian Ronn Cantu, an Army sergeant stationed at Fort Hood, Texas. Both his grandfathers served in the Army, his father was drafted into Vietnam and Cantu himself enlisted in 1998 as a self-described "Bush conservative."

After serving out his contract, Cantu re-enlisted in March 2003. "I was in junior college studying journalism but couldn't re-adjust to civilian life. And as a journalism major I was constantly watching and reading the news, and I got totally sold that Iraq was a threat, that it had WMD, that it was going to erase America off the map."

Next thing he knew, Cantu was attached to an infantry unit in Iraq. In charge of ammo, and after making more than 300 harrowing convoys, he had seen enough. He voted against Bush in 2004 and now strongly opposes the war. While still on active duty he has not only signed the Appeal but has joined Iraq Veterans Against the War. On its website he's a contributor of pointed essays bucking Bush Administration policy. He's also started his own website—soldiervoices.net—where he's running his own freewheeling online GI forum. A firm supporter of troop withdrawal, Cantu has nevertheless enlisted for three more years and is currently preparing for a second tour of Iraq. "I'm going back with a job in military intelligence. It's a job that I think can help end the war," he says. "Working in human intelligence, I will be able to talk to Iraqis and that way find and hear the truth."

A few of the antiwar dissidents lean more toward resistance than re-enlistment. Marc Train, 19, is an Army grunt stationed at Fort Stewart, Georgia, and a signer of the Appeal. A native of Salina, Kansas, Train joined the Army right out of high school, convinced that he had no other real career prospects.

Some of his comrades in the Third Infantry Division are scheduled to deploy to Iraq for a staggering third tour of duty. For Train, it will be his first—if he doesn't refuse. He says he wasn't very political before enlisting, but now he's been radicalized. He realizes now he joined the Army only to get a job and that he's grown suspicious of the Administration's motives for war in Iraq. "I think it's all about oil," he says. Train has made clear to his superiors that he's not happy about deploying to Iraq and might

Lt. Ehren Watada: Resister

Since the US invasion in 2003, a handful of active-duty troops have openly refused deployment to Iraq. But the lightning rod case of resistance has been that of 28-year-old Lieut. Ehren Watada of the US Army.

The highest-ranking commissioned officer to resist deployment, Watada faces a court-martial showdown as early as February, a trial that could land him an eight-year jail sentence. He has been charged with missing a troop movement, conduct unbecoming an officer and contempt toward officials. What particularly irked the Army was Watada's August appearance before a Veterans for Peace convention in Seattle, where the young officer called for more resistance to the war in Iraq. "The idea is this," Watada said, "that to stop an illegal and unjust war, the soldiers can choose to stop fighting it."

Watada's father, Robert Watada, was a conscientious objector to the Vietnam War and did alternative service in the Peace Corps. But the younger Watada was no pacifist. "It was all about September 11," Watada says in an interview from his home off base near Fort Lewis, Washington. "Any way to serve and defend our country. I was no different. And I had other reasons as well: wanting to be part of something bigger and more noble."

After finishing college and considering a career as a police officer, Watada entered the Army and went into Officer Candidate School just as the United States was invading Iraq. Neither a fervent supporter of the war nor an opponent, Watada describes himself as then being "a little bit too naïve in trusting the government." Later, while assigned to training with a Stryker Brigade, Watada became consumed with doubt. "When I saw there were no WMD, when I saw what was happening, all of a sudden I felt that reality wasn't in sync with what we were being told," he says. Following a stint in Korea, his unit got the word that it would soon be mobilized to Iraq. After months of unsuccessful closed-door negotiation with the Fort Lewis command, and after Watada made an offer to serve in combat in Afghanistan instead of Iraq, the situation came to a head. On June 22, Watada formally refused deployment.

Watada argues that he's not afraid of combat and doesn't feel any disloyalty to the military. He swore an oath, he says, not of personal loyalty to the President but rather to defend and uphold the Constitution. When a war is "illegal and unconstitutional," as he labels the Iraq War, a soldier's obligation is to oppose it.

Watada has picked up the support of a long list of traditional peace groups as well as a number of prominent retired military officers, the National Japanese American United Methodist Caucus, and the Honolulu and Berkeley chapters of the Japanese American Citizens League. Oregon State Representative Peter Buckley has also given Watada full public support. In late January, a "Citizens' Hearing on the Legality of U.S. Actions in Iraq," featuring Daniel Ellsberg and Princeton professor emeritus Richard Falk will be convened in Tacoma, Washington, in support of Watada (see www.thankyoult.org).

Watada's attorney, veteran civil rights lawyer Eric Seitz, says the case coalesces antiwar sentiment. "When Ehren emerged in June it was like a bold strike that enlightened a lot of people," says Seitz. "He's had a tremendous effect on so many."

Watada's soft-spoken, diminutive father, a retired Hawaii state official, says, "The mistake the military made with Ehren is that as a lieutenant he had to study. And the more he read, the more he came upon the lies of Bush and Cheney." He continues, "We talked a lot about the consequences of his decision. I told him he would be called a traitor, and a coward. I told him that the best thing he could do was to hide in the Green Zone for a year and then come home. But he told me no, that he had already made his decision and that he would stick to it."

Watada says the greatest effect has been on his own consciousness. "At first I felt really ashamed to be part of this war, by not knowing about it in the first place, by condoning it, by enabling it," he says. "But fortunately I live in a country where I can't be tortured or executed for what I say. I feel so fortunate to have been given this opportunity to make real change. That's why I joined the military in the first place." M.C.

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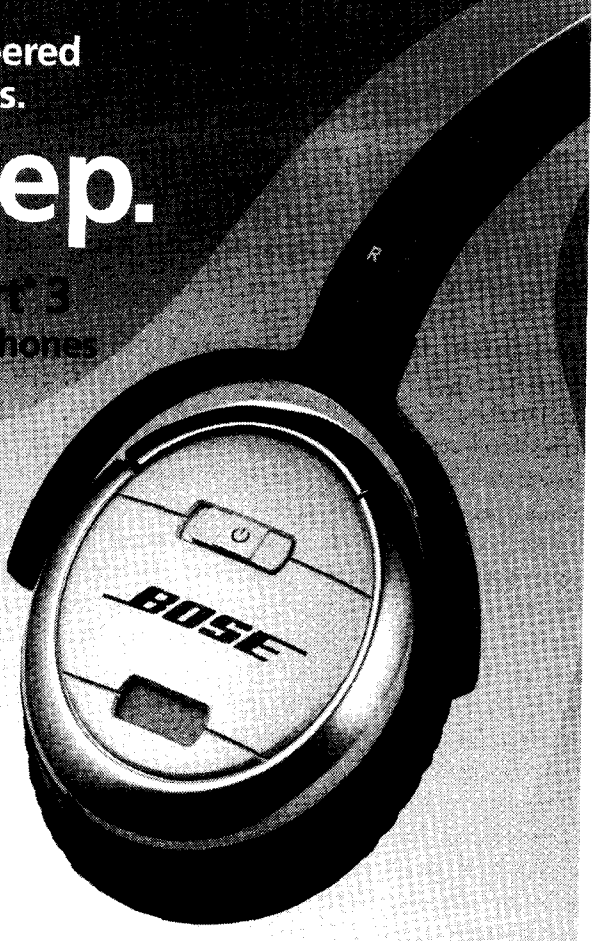

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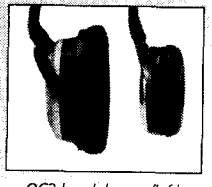

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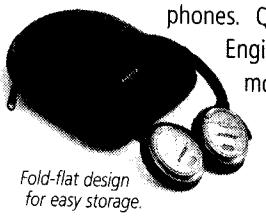

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refuse to step over the line when the mobilization order becomes effective in January. He's already lost the security clearance for the intelligence job he was trained for, and he's now enmeshed in a series of official investigations. "I want separation from the Army because I don't want to be just a cog in the machine. I've registered as a member of the Socialist Party USA."

Asked whether he will refuse duty if not given the discharge he seeks, Train answers: "That's a very strong question for me, a very strong consideration. Right now, I'm about 70 percent leaning toward not going."

Some expert observers of military affairs, like Robert Hodierne, senior managing editor of Army Times Publishing, argue that the numbers of active-duty soldiers and sailors who have signed on to the Appeal and expressed some sort of public dissent aren't impressive. "Dissent of that nature represents but a small percentage of the people in uniform," Hodierne says, pointing out that 1.4 million serve in the armed forces. "What we are sensing is a great deal of disenchantment with the way the war has been fought, not whether it is or is not an unjust war."

But Kelly Dougherty, co-chair of the board of Iraq Veterans Against the War, who served with the Colorado Army National Guard in Iraq in 2003–04, says that critics like Hodierne are underestimating the level of dissent in the ranks. "Critics will say 800 or 1,000 signers isn't significant. I think it is," she says from her Philadelphia headquarters. "For everyone who has heard about the Appeal there are so many dozens of others who agree with it but have not heard about it or agree with it but are intimidated by the military." The military, meanwhile, has so far taken a hands-off approach to the Appeal. None of the active-duty personnel interviewed for this piece reported any reprisals. "The only official word I've gotten came from my public affairs officer," said Appeal founder Hutto. "He told me the rules: Don't do anything while in uniform or while on duty. And that was that."

Commander Chris Sims, spokesman for the Atlantic Fleet Naval Air Force, says that Hutto violates no military regulations if he's off-duty when speaking out. And Pentagon spokesman Maj. Stewart Upton, when asked about the Appeal, said: "Members of the armed forces are free to communicate with Congress in a lawful manner that doesn't violate the Uniform Code of Military Justice."

Lawyer J.E. McNeil at the GI Rights Hotline is convinced that the benign response from the higher command reflects the level of doubt that currently permeates the military. "There are enough people in the military who agree with these guys is why they are not getting much flak," she says. "I think there's a lot of sympathy among officers. We talk to them all the time. And while a lot of them don't want to stand up publicly, we know they admire those who have signed the Appeal. Admire them and support them."

One barometer of discontent is the sheer number of calls and inquiries that keep pouring in to the GI Rights Hotline, holding steady for the past year at about 3,000 a month. From the National Lawyers Guild Military Law Task Force comes a similar report. "There's no let-up, we're swamped all the time," says San Francisco–based co-chair Marti Hiken. "And whenever a reserve unit is activated, our phones begin ringing off the hook. We hear from people who didn't even know they were still in the reserves and can't understand what's happening to them."

That so-called backdoor draft, the mobilizing not only of National Guard and Army reserves but even of the Individual Ready Reserve (the IRR was called up for the first time since the Gulf War) has been a major catalyst for the military antiwar movement. It helped fuel the founding of Military Families Speak Out (MFSO) four years ago and has since helped it grow to include more than 3,000 families.

Two years before the media focused the spotlight on Cindy Sheehan, the Gold Star mother who camped out for weeks at a time near Crawford, Texas, trying to confront George W. Bush on the reasons for her son Casey's death in Iraq, Nancy Lessin and her husband, Charley Richardson—with a son in the Marines—began publicly campaigning against the war. One of the organizations sponsoring the Appeal, MFSO brought a few dozen military families to the Washington Mall on Veterans Day weekend to lobby for a meeting with Defense Secretary Rumsfeld. By the time their plane touched the ground, however, Rumsfeld had been dumped and instead they met with a representative of incoming House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

Lessin, who works as a safety and health coordinator for the Massachusetts AFL-CIO, describes that meeting as cordial but unsatisfying. She expresses fear that even with an incoming Democratic Congress, or maybe as a result of it, there will be too much room for distraction. Whether it moves toward impeachment or the convening of protracted hearings or endless debate over the Baker-Hamilton report, Lessin argues it's all beside the central point. "What we are looking for from Congress is action, not words," says Lessin. "We're worried the Democrats will focus the headlines on hearings, on how bad the management of the war has been—but we know that already. To the politicians who say we need two or three months to consider this or that plan, we ask: What do you say looking in the eye of one of those whose child is killed in those two or three months?"

Soon, some of those Congress members will have the opportunity to look in the eyes of not only the parents but also the troops. Appeal organizers, working on the Martin Luther King Day appearance on the Hill, are hoping to help galvanize Democratic support for a more explicit pro-withdrawal position. So far, only veteran antiwar Congressman Dennis Kucinich of Ohio has explicitly endorsed the Appeal. Senator Patrick Leahy of Vermont has made some complimentary remarks. How much support the Appeal can muster on the Hill in the coming weeks could be a watershed test for Democrats.

Phil Waste, a 67-year-old retired elevator repairman turned activist with MFSO, with three sons and two grandchildren who have served or are currently deployed in Iraq, thinks the window of opportunity for Democrats to take up the call of organized active-duty dissidents is narrow. If the new Congressional majority dawdles over the war, the Democrats will become targets of the antiwar protesters. "I think those who say they oppose this war have to act now, not months from now," he says. "And I am most definitely talking about the Democrats. This past election was a referendum on the war, and that mandate better be heeded. If not, two years from now they will be out on their butts. And I along with everyone else I know will work my ass off to see that happen." ■

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Dr. Bart D. Ehrman is the James A. Gray Professor and Chair of the Department of Religious Studies at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He received his Masters of Divinity and Ph.D. from Princeton Theological Seminary. He has won several teaching awards, including the Students' Undergraduate Teaching Award and the Bowman and Gordon Gray Award for Excellence in Teaching. Professor Ehrman has written or edited more than 15 books, including the New York Times bestseller, *Misquoting Jesus,* and *Jesus: Apocalyptic Prophet of the New Millennium.*

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People's Revolt in Lebanon

MOHAMAD BAZZI

Beirut

Ever since Hezbollah and its allies began an open-ended protest against the US-backed government on December 1, Beirut's gilded downtown—built for wealthy Lebanese and foreign tourists—has become more authentically Lebanese. Where Persian Gulf sheiks once ate sushi, families now sit in abandoned parking lots, having impromptu picnics, the smell of kebabs cooked over coals wafting through the air. Young men lounge on plastic chairs, smoking apple-scented water pipes, and occasionally break out into *debke*, the Lebanese national dance.

PETER O. ZIERLEIN

Most protesters are too poor to afford $4 caffe lattes, but men hawking shots of strong Arabic coffee for 30 cents apiece are doing a brisk trade. Nearly all businesses are shuttered, but a few enterprising store owners have figured out how to cater to the crowd. One hair salon converted itself into a sandwich shop, selling cheese on bread with a cup of tea for $1. The smiling cashier works behind a counter filled with L'Oréal hair products.

"I never came to downtown before these protests. I can't afford to come here. If I ate a sandwich here, I'd be broke for a week," says Emad Matairek, a 35-year-old carpenter from the *dahiyeh*, the Shiite-dominated suburbs of Beirut. "It's well-known that this area was not built for us."

The protests are being portrayed in much of the Western media as a sectarian battle, or a coup attempt—engineered by Hezbollah's two main allies, Syria and Iran—against a US-backed Lebanese government. Those are indeed factors underlying the complex and dangerous political dance happening in Beirut. But the biggest motivator driving many of those camped out in downtown isn't Iran or Syria, or Sunni versus Shiite. It's the economic inequality that has haunted Lebanese Shiites for decades. It's a poor and working-class people's revolt.

In Riad Solh Square, amid dozens of white tents erected for Hezbollah supporters to sleep in, there is a stage with a huge TV screen and rows of loudspeakers mostly positioned toward the Grand Serail, the Ottoman-era palace where Prime Minister Fouad Siniora and his Cabinet are hunkered down. Between the tents and the palace, behind eight-foot-high coils of barbed wire, there are hundreds of Lebanese soldiers toting M-16s and sitting atop armored vehicles. Every night thousands of people gather in front of the stage, within earshot of the Serail, demanding that Siniora either resign or accept a national unity government that gives Hezbollah and its allies greater power.

A major theme highlighted by the protesters is that Siniora is backed by the Bush Administration—and that alliance did little to help Lebanon during last summer's thirty-four-day war between Israel and Hezbollah. A few days into the sit-in, Hezbollah hung a large banner from a building showing Siniora embracing Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, over a collage of dead Lebanese children Photoshopped onto his back. It reads, "Condy—Thanks," a reference to Siniora's meeting with Rice during the war, when US officials refused to endorse a quick cease-fire. "Thank you for your patience Condy, for some of our children are still alive," it reads.

But in most conversations with people at the sit-in and protests, economic concerns quickly emerge: Siniora's government is corrupt, has failed to reduce Lebanon's crippling $41 billion public debt and has done little to improve people's lives. Shiites are especially forgotten in the country's economic planning. Many at the sit-in have been out of work for years, or lost their jobs after the recent war.

"Our country is getting poorer, and Siniora's government is not talking about it," says Hadi Mawla, a 22-year-old graphic design student who came from the *dahiyeh* on the protest's first day, which drew hundreds of thousands to downtown. "Our standard of living is falling, while other Arab countries are improving. We Lebanese used to make fun of other Arab countries. Now they have great big cities like Dubai. And we're going to end up like Egypt—with a very poor class, a very rich class and nothing in between."

The economic dimension to the protest can be seen everywhere. Around the square there are hand-drawn posters of Siniora sitting on a chair made of stacks of dollar bills. From the stage, a projector shines slogans highlighting economic demands onto a building that houses the ultra-chic Buddha Bar, with its two-story Buddha statue inside. The swirling projector makes its point: "No to the government of VAT" and "No to the government of seafront properties."

This class battle transcends sectarian boundaries. Hezbollah has formed an alliance with the Free Patriotic Movement, led by Maronite Christian politician and former army commander Michel Aoun. With this coalition Hezbollah is trying to prove that it's not a purely sectarian party, it's not seeking to impose an Islamic government and it's willing to ally not just with nationalist Sunnis but also with Christians. Because Aoun stresses honest government, accountability and economic equality, he and Hezbollah seemed like a natural fit. By playing up its alliance with Aoun—and downplaying its partnership with the notoriously corrupt Shiite Amal party—Hezbollah can reinforce the reputation for honesty shared by many Islamist movements in the Middle East.

Hezbollah's charismatic leader, Sayyid Hassan Nasrallah—ever skillful at tapping into the Shiite tradition of empowering the dispossessed—often highlights the class dimension of his group's campaign. "They will hear us in all the palaces of the ruling coalition," Nasrallah thundered on December 7, in a speech via videolink to the protesters downtown. He was calling for a huge turn-

Mohamad Bazzi, the Middle East bureau chief for Newsday *since 2003, is based in Beirut.*

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out at a rally three days later, where crowd estimates ranged as high as 1 million. "From the homes of the poor, from the shantytowns, from the tents, from the demolished buildings, from the neighborhoods of those displaced by war, we will make sure that they hear our voices."

There's a long tradition of the Lebanese state leaving Shiites to fend for themselves and waiting for religious or charitable groups to fill the vacuum. This happened over decades, long before Hezbollah emerged in the early 1980s. Hezbollah's "state within a state" was possible only because successive governments willfully left a void in the Shiite-dominated areas of south Lebanon, the Bekaa Valley and the *dahiyeh*.

"The central government always liked outsourcing the problems of the south. First they gave it to the Palestinians, then they gave it to the Israelis, and they gave it to Hezbollah from 2000 to 2006," says Khalil Gebara, co-director of the Lebanese Transparency Association, an anti-corruption watchdog group. "Hezbollah does what every political party does: They went and created a dependency network."

'Hezbollah gave us a new sense of dignity, and that's the most important right we can have.' —Hadi Mawla, a Shiite demonstrator

In the 1960s and '70s, when Shiites were first making the migration from the rural south and Bekaa to Beirut and other cities, the central government left their fate to the clans and feudal landlords who held sway in the agricultural hinterlands. By 1970, when the Palestine Liberation Organization began creating bases in southern Lebanon, the Shiites were on the front line of a conflict between the PLO and Israel. A Shiite cleric named Musa al-Sadr created Amal, the first Shiite political party, which later turned into a militia. To an extent, Amal supplanted the feudal lords as protector of the Shiites.

After the Israeli invasion of 1982, Hezbollah emerged to fight the Israeli occupation. It was more disciplined and less corrupt than Amal, although Hezbollah was always dependent on Iranian funding and support. When Hezbollah's grinding guerrilla war forced Israel to end its occupation in May 2000, the militia was hailed throughout the Muslim world for achieving what no Arab army had done before: force Israel to relinquish land. With the Israeli withdrawal, Hezbollah moved into the vacuum in southern Lebanon, opening clinics and schools and providing small-business loans.

To many Shiites, Hezbollah's ascendance put them on the political map. There's a word Lebanese have used to put down a Shiite: *mutawali*, which roughly translates into "country bumpkin." It's a term freighted with meaning—of dispossession, prejudice, deprivation. But Shiites have appropriated it and now use it with pride. "During the civil war, we *mutawalis* were insulted and put down. Hezbollah gave us a new sense of dignity, and that's the most important right we can have," says Mawla, the graphic design student. "Hezbollah made it possible for us to stand, without fear, and shout from the rooftops that we are *mutawalis*."

In 1990, at the end of the fifteen-year civil war, Lebanon's political class chose to continue its sectarian system. The current crisis is rooted in that choice, which began with the 1989 Taif Accord, brokered by Saudi Arabia and Syria. The agreement called for all militias to disarm—with the exception of Hezbollah, whose militia was labeled a "national resistance" against the Israeli occupation. Leaving traditional warlords in place, Taif enshrined the political partition among the country's rival sects: Power must be shared between a Maronite Christian president, a Sunni prime minister and a Shiite speaker of Parliament. Each of the major players in the war seized a piece of the government and extended the sectarian system to the lowest rungs of the civil service. This arrangement was ripe for exploitation by outside powers, especially Syria, which dominated Lebanon from 1990 until last year.

One man had a chance to change the economic underpinnings of this system, and perhaps eventually cast aside its entire sectarian basis. He was Rafik Hariri, a billionaire construction tycoon who served as prime minister for most of the 1990s and until late 2004. But Hariri failed at building a healthy postwar economy. He rebuilt downtown Beirut at the expense of the hinterlands, and he focused on luxury sectors—banking and upscale tourism—instead of Lebanon's productive sectors, agriculture and small industry. Hariri was trying to return to the prewar economy, which was driven by Lebanon's role as a transit center for oil money from the Persian Gulf. But by the 1990s oil producers no longer needed the Lebanese banking system; they had Dubai.

"Everything that the government built around here means nothing to us," says Matairek, the carpenter at the downtown protests. "What they should have done was strengthen the Lebanese army. All the money they spent to fix this downtown—what's the use of it, if the Israeli warplanes were able to bomb us, and the Lebanese army wasn't able to stop it?"

The gleaming downtown became a symbol of Hariri's reign and his failed economic policies. By the time he left office Lebanon had a $36 billion public debt, or 170 percent of GDP—one of the highest debt-to-GDP ratios in the world (it's now 190 percent). For much of Hariri's term, he relied on Siniora, an old friend, as his finance minister.

Siniora's biggest triumph as finance minister was the 2002 Paris II Donors Conference, which netted Lebanon $4.4 billion in soft loan guarantees. In return Siniora promised a raft of neoliberal economic reforms: He would privatize state assets like cellphone contracts, reform the country's civil service sector and balance the budget by 2006. Nine months before the donors conference, Siniora imposed Lebanon's first value-added tax (VAT): a 10 percent surcharge on most goods except food and medicines. One of his main arguments for staying in office is to shepherd a Paris III conference scheduled for January, in which international donors are expected to contribute toward rebuilding the infrastructure devastated by last summer's Israeli offensive.

"Because of Siniora and his economic programs, we have a very flawed tax system, based on indirect taxes. Statistically, it has been shown that this system recycles money from the poor to the wealthy," says Fawwaz Traboulsi, a political science professor at the Lebanese American University. "We have a 10 percent flat income tax, but most state revenues come from indirect taxation: the VAT, fuel taxes, utility surcharges. Salaried people pay the bulk of these taxes."

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Throughout his tenure, Hariri clashed with the Syrian-backed Lebanese president, Emile Lahoud. In February 2005 Hariri was assassinated in a massive bombing as his motorcade drove through Beirut's seaside corniche. Widely assumed to have been carried out by Syria or its agents, the killing shook Lebanon and cast a harsh light on Syrian hegemony over the political system. Under internal pressure and mass demonstrations, the Syrian-backed prime minister resigned and Damascus pulled its 14,000 troops out of Lebanon. After elections in June 2005, the new parliamentary majority—a coalition of Christian, Sunni and Druse parties—appointed Siniora as prime minister. For the first time, Hezbollah joined the Lebanese Cabinet, securing two seats in Siniora's administration.

Until last summer's Israel-Hezbollah war, Siniora continued with the economic policies he had begun under Hariri. Morality aside, there's one major problem with these soak-the-poor economics: They strengthen Hezbollah. In a country divided drastically between haves and have-nots, a large proportion of the have-nots happen to be Shiites, and they rely for social services not on the government but on Hezbollah. In their view, the government takes, while Hezbollah provides.

After the latest war, with Israeli bombs targeting Shiite-owned factories and businesses in the south and in the Beirut suburbs, the Shiite middle class was devastated. This has made Shiites even more dependent on Hezbollah, as evidenced by the group's handing out up to $12,000 in cash payments to everyone whose home was destroyed. The money—most likely provided by Iran—was intended to pay for a year's rent and new furniture while reconstruction begins.

Locked in a state of perpetual conflict, Lebanon today faces the same choice it had in 1990, when the civil war ended. It can replicate the political system that it had before—based on corrupt sectarian warlords dividing up the spoils of the war they perpetuated—or it can try to produce a stronger and more egalitarian system, one that isn't based on religious divisions and that won't consign its largest sect, the Shiites, to the care of an Iranian-funded religious party.

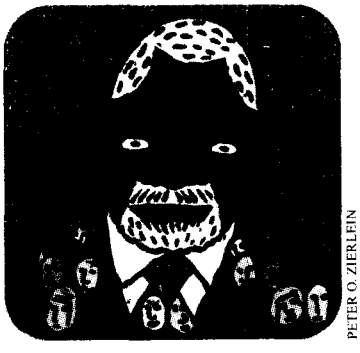
"How can we still accept this government that steals? This government that built this downtown and accumulated this huge debt?" asks Matairek, the Shiite carpenter. "Who's going to pay for it? I have to pay for it, and my son is going to pay for it after me." ■

THE OUTGOING UN CHIEF'S RESISTANCE TO THE RABID RIGHT WAS LOW-KEY BUT EFFECTIVE.

Annan's Principled Pragmatism

IAN WILLIAMS

Ban Ki-moon was sworn into office as the new United Nations Secretary General on December 14. Soon he will be sworn at, when once again the UN fails to obey US orders. Any secretary general's honeymoon in Washington is likely to be short. Who now remembers that outgoing Secretary General Kofi Annan was a US nomination back in 1996, or that he managed to persuade Jurassic Jesse Helms to cut a deal on paying off Washington's debt to the UN?



PETER O. ZIERLEIN

As Annan leaves, it gives him some wry satisfaction that John Bolton, the US ambassador who thought he was a viceroy, has been sent off the field by the new Democratic Congress. After spending his first term perceived almost as a secular saint, Annan spent much of his second being reviled by Bolton's soulmates as a global kleptocrat.

It was mostly in the United States that the sustained neocon Swift-boating, through the alleged "Oil for Food Scandal," muddied Annan's reputation. Fortunately, the rest of the world took little notice of those furious and hyperbolic exaggerations. Annan's historical position is now clearer, and it is not just customary valediction to say that he has been one of the most effective secretary generals in UN history. Successes in Sierra Leone, Liberia, East Timor, Lebanon and Congo's first free elections in four decades are no mean vindication of Annan's principled pragmatism.

Bill Clinton pushed Annan's appointment because of a misapprehension that he would be a reverse of his predecessor, Boutros Boutros-Ghali: more secretary than general. Clinton and his Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, did not want someone with big ideas and a big mouth engaging in public debates with their Administration. They thought they could count on the reserved UN bureaucrat to deliver.

They were right about the big mouth, wrong on the big ideas. Annan is not a great orator. Audiences have to strain to hear his softly spoken phrases, whose content has usually been carefully polished to remove any language that would be too confrontational. Yet the big ideas kept coming.

As a cog in the UN juggernaut hijacked by the great powers, Annan was implicated in the bloody failures in Bosnia and Rwanda, and on taking office he tried to make "Never Again" more than an empty slogan, beginning with an unprecedentedly open report on the UN's role in those events. Human rights, development and global responsibility were his constant refrain over the years, and he reclaimed a role for the UN as a standard setter, making development a global issue.

Annan's quiet authority and palpable decency made him a perfect standard-bearer both for the organization and for these values. It was precisely those strengths that the xenophobic wing

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of the US media tried to undermine in his second term, when he stated the obvious truths about Washington's disregard for international law and human rights, most notably in Iraq.

However, there is a built-in contradiction in combining the roles of peacemaker and tribune of the world's peoples. The secretary general cannot bad-mouth perpetrators too strongly, since he may have to negotiate with them. Even some close aides wish that Annan had been more stentorian in his statements. Annan admits that sometimes he may have been too low-key, but he argues that "particularly when it comes to human dignity and individual rights, some of the positions I have taken...are also intended to empower others, particularly the civil society. In some countries people can quote the secretary general...and not go to jail. If they say it themselves they will be in trouble."

When Annan took office, the UN was still reeling from decades of Congressional assault—culminating in the US putsch against Boutros-Ghali. The organization had few friends in Washington. Annan realized the importance of engaging the United States actively—not just for the sake of his own survival but for that of the organization itself. That predicated cultivating a US constituency, and Annan was remarkably successful at it for most of his tenure. In particular, he engaged American Jewish organizations and worked hard to end the isolation of Israel inside the world body, at the risk of alienating key international constituencies. This led to criticism—some of it from supporters and close associates—that he was forgetting the Palestinians. However, Annan has consistently restated and emphasized the UN's legal and humanitarian positions on Israel, and he condemned the Israeli attack on the UN's Khiyam outpost in Lebanon during the summer war.

Annan had built enough trust from both sides for the resolution of this summer's war in Lebanon, which was perhaps the best vindication of his principled pragmatism. Once again, the UN had to cope with the consequences of Washington's refusal to listen to others. Annan called for a cease-fire when two permanent members, the United States and Britain, regarded it as "premature." While the Security Council was tied down by a threatened US veto, Annan had the UN pre-emptively preparing a solution—an expanded and reinforced peacekeeping force, which allowed the Israelis and their allies to climb down from the pole up which they had clambered. Ten years ago it was a major plank of Israeli, and consequently US, Middle East policy to exclude the UN from any role. Following ten years of Annan's tightrope diplomacy, the Israelis pleaded for the UN to step in.

While the Bush White House did not overtly join the assault on Annan's integrity during the so-called Oil for Food Scandal, it certainly did not try to curb the rabid right when they were calling for his resignation. Annan admits, "There have been times when it has been tough, particularly when some people on the Hill or the right wing begin attacking the UN and the Secretary General, and no one pulls them back.... If you undermine the organization to that extent, your own population may ask you, Why are you going to this organization that you've discredited so much?"

For fifteen years the US perception of the UN has revolved around the issue of Iraq. The organization was a convenient scapegoat for US policy failures, which ricocheted catastrophically from insufficient resolution to too much. Washington expect-

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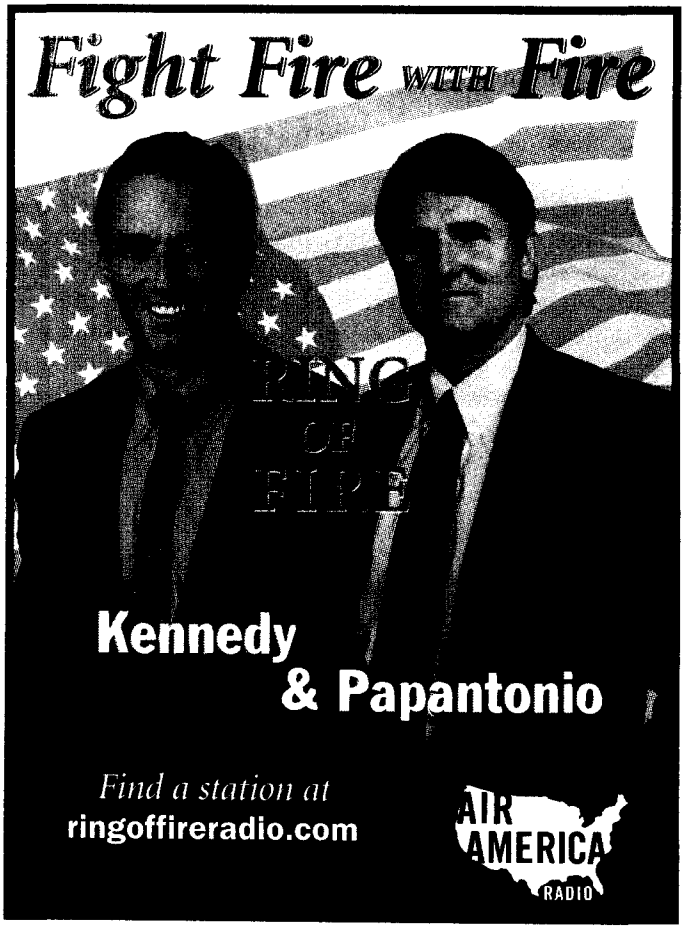

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ed the UN to follow faithfully every wobble. Saddam Hussein did consistently violate the terms of UN resolutions, but Washington's positions, not least in treating weapons inspectors as a branch of US intelligence, succeeded in giving his defiance quasi legitimacy. Both the Clinton and Bush administrations made it plain they would veto any lifting of sanctions until regime change—even though this was not in any way a part of the UN resolutions. First Boutros-Ghali and then Annan had to negotiate compliance from Baghdad, even though Washington's veto insured that they could offer no "light at the end of the tunnel." Iraqi civilians paid the price for the obduracy of both Baghdad and Washington. In 1998, after negotiating with Saddam, Annan himself pointed out, "You can do a lot with diplomacy, but with diplomacy backed up by force you can get a lot more done." That was never consistently forthcoming.

Annan is deeply conscious of the collateral damage of the Iraq War on the global community: "It led to a major division in this organization and in the world. And it has not healed yet.... At the early stages the leaders themselves were quite divided, and they were very vocal about it.... They are trying to mend fences and work together, but we are not there yet."

In his typically oblique way, Annan lodges a criticism of the invasion: "The member states debated it fully here, and you noticed that the majority of the members in the Council could not bring themselves to vote for the military action. The US and others decided to go outside the Council to take action, and of course individual governments are free to take decisions that they wish to. But I think it was appropriate that the Council took the decision it did." True to form, even at this late stage, when he is beyond the reach of Rush Limbaugh and Norm Coleman, he persists in a nonconfrontational correction.

Following the UN's laudable but ineffective refusal to authorize the invasion, neocon warrior Richard Perle, a member of George W. Bush's Defense Policy Board at the time, crowed over the organization's troubles in an article headlined, "Thank God for the death of the UN." It wasn't long before triumph turned to quagmire, with Washington calling on the UN for its services.

The war was also to have profound consequences for Annan's media image in the United States, as it allowed all the obsessive UN-baiters out of their kennels. Hitherto the perception of him had been of one who was Teflon-coated and unassailable, exuding moral authority. No longer. One of the postwar responsibilities the UN accepted was the transition from occupation to Iraqi self-government, and the officials involved were well aware that the neocons' man, Ahmad Chalabi, was a self-promoting carpetbagger with a bigger constituency in Washington think tanks than in Baghdad. Chalabi and the think tanks bitterly opposed UN involvement, not least for that reason. He came to New York and threatened Annan's office with consequences—with the Oil for Food Scandal, in fact.

At the time Annan described the imbroglio as "a bit like lynching." A distressing number of American media assessments of his tenure are still presenting it as a taint on Annan's reputation rather than a blot on their colleagues' integrity for joining in the malicious Swift-boating. In fact, as demonstrated in these pages [see Williams, "The Right's Assault on Kofi Annan," January 10/17, 2005], by any rational standards Oil for Food was a success, so much so that Washington asked that it be continued in the year after the invasion. The Volcker Commission inquiry alleged that the OFF director had received $140,000 over four years in kickbacks from perfectly legal, if unethical, oil trades. The rest of the money allegedly transferred to Saddam was the result of oil sales in breach of sanctions but condoned by Security Council members, or from companies whose behavior was overlooked by member governments.

Still bemused by the media battering, Annan suggests that publicity during the inquiry was "patently unfair. What was interesting was the way they handled it, with rogue investigators leaking information and leading people astray. When the full story came out and they discovered that the scandal was not here but in the capitals, with the 2,200 companies involved in kickbacks, the story died." No part of the scandal was more dead than the $10 billion from the program that was given to US occupation authorities—spent lavishly and with very little paper trail. Representative Henry Waxman has been a lonely voice in Washington following the trail from OFF to GOP crony contractors. So far Annan's media persecutors have shown little interest.

Those who do not read or watch the Murdoch media will probably note that Annan's biggest historical legacy will be the "Responsibility to Protect." Rather than try to amend the UN Charter, in 2005 he maneuvered the heads of state at the UN's sixtieth-anniversary World Summit to reinterpret it. From now on, the threats to "peace and security" that the Security Council is chartered to fight include governments' failures to protect their own people, thus overturning the centuries-old principle of absolute national sovereignty accepted by the Charter.

Annan reminisces about the initial reaction to his raising the subject: "When I said, back in 1999, 'We cannot accept that governments can hide behind the shield of sovereignty and brutalize their people or allow these violations to go on,' quite a lot of ambassadors were very upset that I was encouraging interference in their internal affairs. And yet five, six years on, we have the 'Responsibility to Protect' as a principle accepted by all heads of state." It has taken several millennia for an accepted principle like "Thou shalt not kill" to be implemented, so we should not be too disappointed if the continuing carnage in Darfur casts doubt upon the sincerity of many of those heads. At least the concept strips the defenders of mass murder of any spurious legal or ethical defense based on national sovereignty.

Even if it is unfinished business, Darfur is certainly not Annan's failure; he has been remarkably outspoken about the culpability of Khartoum. "When I hear heads of state get up and say, 'The UN must act in, say, Darfur,' who is the UN here?" he asks. "We need to hold governments to the solemn pledge they made in the General Assembly. Most people believe that Darfur is a sort of test, so we need to remind them that they made this solemn pledge and we want them to redeem it. What's even more important is that peoples around the world can use this to push member states to action." He adds, "Without pressure from the population and civil society, I don't think they would do it."

Annan has done more than any predecessor to insure that those invoked in the opening words of the UN Charter, "We the peoples of the world," have a serious place on the UN agenda. Under very difficult circumstances, one of which was the negative role of US administrations, he has done remarkably well. ■

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

Parasites of Plunder?

RICHARD J. EVANS

HITLER'S BENEFICIARIES: Plunder, Racial War, and the Nazi Welfare State.
By Götz Aly.
Translated by Jefferson Chase.
Metropolitan. 431 pp. $32.50.

Why did Germans keep supporting Hitler and the Nazis until the end of the war? Why didn't they rise up against a regime that was committing mass murder and atrocity on an unimaginable scale? Why didn't the mass Allied bombing of German cities lead to a popular revolt against Hitler?

Many historians have tried to answer these questions over the years since the Nazi regime collapsed in ruins in 1945. Older explanations looked to stereotypes of the German national character for an answer—militarism, love of violence, willingness to obey authority, desire for strong leadership, civil passivity and similar clichés of dubious validity. More recently, some historians have argued that propaganda played a central role in rallying Germans to the Nazi flag; others have stressed the growing terror to which the Nazi Party subjected the German people, above all in the later stages of the war. A few years ago, American political scientist Daniel Jonah Goldhagen suggested that the overwhelming majority of Germans were fanatical supporters of Nazi anti-Semitism from the outset. Others have sought an explanation in the Germans' mindless enthusiasm for the charismatic leadership of Adolf Hitler.

None of these explanations by itself has proved very convincing. Simplistic notions of a German national character have foundered, like Goldhagen's sweeping generalizations, on the objection that a majority of Germans, in the Social Democratic and Communist parties, the Catholic community and many other parts of society, refused to lend their support to the Nazis in any of the elections of the Weimar Republic, where the Nazis never got much more than a third of the vote. There is plenty of evidence that Nazi propaganda, though not wholly ineffective, was limited in its impact, especially among these previously resistant sectors of the population and above all in the second half of the war, when Germany was demonstrably heading toward defeat. Hitler certainly seemed immune from popular criticism, at least until 1943, but he was admired as much for what he did as for the image he projected. And terror, though a very real, continuing and in 1944–45 rapidly escalating force, was surely not enough in itself to keep the entire German population in thrall.

In this startling and absorbing new book, which created a considerable storm in Germany when it was published in 2005,

A corrupt bribe-seeking mass of Germans failed to revolt against Nazism because Hitler established a welfare state—based on plunder.

Götz Aly advances another explanation. It was, he says, material factors that persuaded the great mass of Germans to support Hitler and the Nazis almost to the very end. The Nazi leadership, he claims in *Hitler's Beneficiaries*, made the Germans into "well-fed parasites. Vast numbers of Germans fell prey to the euphoria of a gold rush.... As the state was transformed into a gigantic apparatus for plundering others, average Germans became unscrupulous profiteers and passive recipients of bribes."

Already by the late 1930s, Aly argues, even former Social Democrats had become reconciled to the regime because it replaced the mass unemployment and economic misery of the Depression with full employment, generated not least by rapid rearmament, prosperity and consumer satisfaction. During the war, he continues, "the cascade of riches and personal advantage—all derived from crimes against humanity...led the majority of the populace

Richard J. Evans is the author of The Coming of the Third Reich *and* The Third Reich in Power, *both published by Penguin Press. A third volume,* The Third Reich at War, *is in preparation.*

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to feel that the regime had their best interests at heart."

Aly has offered this kind of materialist explanation before, in dealing with Nazi genocide, which he portrayed in his book *"Final Solution": Nazi Population Policy and the Murder of the European Jews*, published in English in 1999, as the outcome of rational, or perhaps one should say pseudo-rational, processes of state planning and ethnic reordering generated in the Nazi and SS bureaucracies. In *Architects of Annihilation*, published in English in 2002 (more than ten years after its first appearance in German), written in collaboration with Susanne Heim, Aly turned his attention to the planners, demographers, civil servants and academics who devised these plans, and argued that in the drive to adjust the ratio between "productive" and "unproductive" population groups in Europe, the planners "advocated state-directed mass extermination as a necessary and logical component of social modernization," envisioning in the process "not only one 'final solution' but serial genocides, planned in detail to be carried out over several decades."

This approach originates in a particular German far-left understanding of Nazism, which seeks at every juncture to link it to processes of modernization culminating in the Federal Republic of the present day. In *Hitler's Beneficiaries*, for instance, Aly misses no opportunity to mention prominent figures in postwar Germany who were enthusiastic about the Third Reich as young men. Not long ago, he caused a stir by indicting much-admired German university historians of the 1950s for what he saw as their role during the Third Reich in planning or justifying Nazi genocide. What makes Aly such an uncomfortable figure for Germans is that his arguments are always buttressed by painstaking, meticulous and very extensive archival research. His voice may be an outsider's voice, but it has to be listened to.

In his new book, he caused an even greater upset in Germany than before by arguing that it was not only the elites whose support for the Nazi regime was based on rational, nonideological grounds but also the vast mass of the people. How does his new claim stand up to critical scrutiny?

Hitler's Beneficiaries, it has to be said, does not begin well. The opening pages on prewar Germany contain many sweeping claims that have long since been exploded by serious research. Thus, contrary to what Aly says, the German middle classes were *not* impoverished by the hyperinflation of 1922–23 (it was great for debtors, mortgage holders and the like); relatively few Communists went over to Nazism in the early 1930s; the plebiscite that brought the Saar (an ethnically German region on the French border under the control of the League of Nations since 1919) back to Germany was *not* a free election; and the Nazi leadership did *not* make automobiles "affordable to everyday Germans." Nazism preached equality, but as with so many aspects of Nazi rhetoric, the reality was very different, and to speak repeatedly, as Aly does, of the Nazis' "socialism" is to mislabel what is better seen as populism; real socialist regimes were very different in their basic political thrust, and few things in this book are less convincing than its attempt to show that the Third Reich was a genuinely redistributive regime that robbed the rich to pay the poor.

While the 'Aryanization' of Jewish property benefited some Germans, it made little difference to the nation's living standard overall.

Desperate to demonstrate that the overwhelming mass of Germans enthusiastically supported Nazism from the start, Aly provides a highly selective list of examples of young people, some of them his own relatives, who waxed rhapsodic about the possibilities the regime offered them. Typically, he quotes Hanns Martin Schleyer, who became president of the Employers' Association in postwar West Germany, enthusing in 1942 about the opportunities Nazism gave to the young: "We learned at a young age during the movement's days of struggle to seek out challenges, instead of waiting for them to come to us—this and our constant efforts for the party, even after it took power, made us ready to take on responsibility much earlier than usual" (Aly neglects to mention that Schleyer was kidnapped and murdered in 1977 by ultra-left German terrorists from the "Red Army Faction," founded by Andreas Baader and Ulrike Meinhof). He also cites two male relatives' entries in the Aly family guest book during the war, with slogans such as "tomorrow belongs to us" and "our country is heading towards a great and glorious future." But one could of course cite just as many testimonies by Germans who were frightened and disturbed by what the Nazi regime was doing, even in the 1930s.

The leadership did not divert resources to fulfilling consumer desires "to the detriment of rearmament"—rather the opposite. True, the Nazis' charitable organizations like the Winter Aid, designed to support the unemployed and their families at a time when jobs were few, or the Nazi People's Welfare, a larger, more formal institution aimed at doing essentially the same thing through the year, raised a lot of money for the less well-off, but a very high proportion of this charity was collected through contributions coerced from the population, including compulsory deductions from wages. The profits gained from the "Aryanization" of Jewish property were significant for those who availed themselves of them, but Jews made up less than 1 percent of Germany's population, and not all of them by any means were rich or even well-off; the difference this made to the nation's living standard overall was minimal, though Aly claims that the Jews were dispossessed, and indeed eventually exterminated, not least in order for the German state to get its hands on their property and use it to raise the people's standard of living.

The *reductio ad absurdum* of all this is reached when Aly claims that "the Third Reich was not a dictatorship maintained by force," citing the small size of the Gestapo, and the fact that there were fewer than 5,000 inmates in concentration camps by 1936; but the Gestapo was only one of a huge range of institutions of coercion and surveillance, all the way down to the "block wardens" who kept order in every street block, and by 1936 the concentration camps had long since given way to the prisons and penitentiaries, where there were some 23,000 political prisoners at this time, put there by a series of draconian laws that abolished every civil freedom and even prescribed the death penalty for telling "hateful" jokes about Hitler.

Even more bizarre, Aly describes the Third Reich as being run by a flat decision-making process, dependent on individual initiative rather than on a top-down hierarchy. The millions of people in Nazi Germany who were caught up in an undemocratic, totalitarian system governed by the all-pervasive "leadership principle" whereby Hitler's most casual remarks were immediately translated into official policy, often with devastating consequences, certainly would have been surprised to learn this.

Aly makes such crude and sweeping generalizations in part because he is almost entirely unfamiliar with the English-language literature on Nazi Germany, which is too large, diverse and sophisticated to be ignored with impunity. One feels

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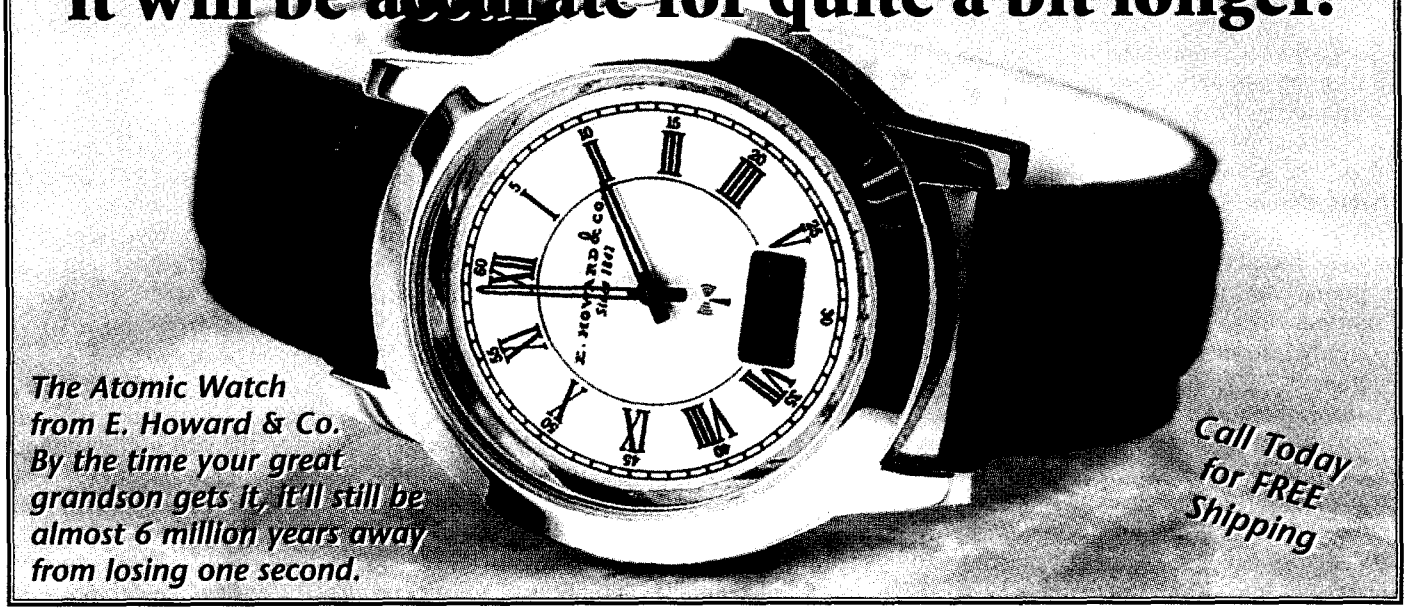

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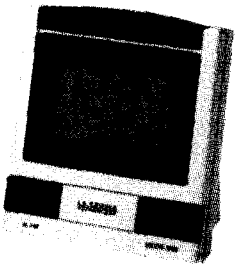

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that here, as elsewhere, his grasp of the secondary literature, and his knowledge of what other historians have written, including in Germany, is less than secure.

Aly's work rests overwhelmingly on documentary research. And here, once he gets beyond the simplistic account of Nazi Germany before the outbreak of the war, he has some interesting discoveries to present. Long ago, British historian Tim Mason pointed out that the Nazis' monomaniacal drive to rearm in preparation for a general European war got the German economy into increasing difficulties by 1939, as growing shortages of materials and labor began to impose growing constraints on production. Workers were increasingly coerced into working longer hours; they responded with rocketing rates of absenteeism, and the regime responded by drafting Gestapo agents into the factories to keep workers' noses to the grindstone. In this situation, economic salvation lay in conquest and plunder. Aly shows that as well as appropriating huge quantities of raw materials from Eastern and Western Europe, and eventually forcing more than 7 million workers from conquered and occupied countries to work for minimal pay in Germany, the regime also exploited the countries it occupied so as to prevent the mass of the German population at home from having to bear the real financial burden of the war.

It did this, as again Mason pointed out some thirty years ago, because Hitler and the leading Nazis were anxious to the point of paranoia about a possible recurrence of the "stab in the back" of 1918, when they believed—quite wrongly, of course—that a catastrophic deterioration of living conditions on the home front had led to a mass revolution, fomented by Jewish subversives, that had betrayed Germany's otherwise victorious army and brought about the country's defeat in World War I. As the Nazis pursued this deadly fantasy, more than half of Germany's Jews were forced out of the country by 1939, and the rest were dispossessed and marginalized and, from 1941 onward, deported and murdered. However, from the Nazi leadership's point of view, this still left the problem of how to maintain a decent standard of living at home.

At this point in the argument, Aly's exposition becomes quite technical and very hard-going for the reader, with a plethora of figures and calculations of tax burdens and exchange rates; but its broad outlines are clear enough. In every country they occupied, the Nazis either introduced a new currency or fixed exchange rates so that German soldiers, administrators and others could use a strong reichsmark to buy up goods cheaply and send them back home to their families. Buying goods abroad also helped control inflation at home. Special credit arrangements were made to assist in this process, and German troops in other countries were specifically allowed to receive money from their families at home to spend on goods they could not get in Germany.

Aly's materialist understanding of Nazism, stimulating though it is, neglects important factors—notably ideology and belief.

Aly cites to dramatic effect the correspondence of a number of German soldiers who described with enthusiasm what they were buying and sending back to their families, among them the young Heinrich Böll, who many years later was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature for his novels and stories. "I've got half a suckling pig for you," he announced triumphantly to his family just before coming home on leave in 1940. After the regime lifted restrictions on how much could be sent home in this way, the number of packages sent from France to Germany by military post ran at more than 3 million a month. Soldiers' pay was increased toward the end of 1940 explicitly in order to help them pay for the foreign goods their families desperately needed.

At home, taxes on the general population were kept as low as possible in order to avoid discontent, while business was taxed more heavily, not least on the grounds that this would not incur the wrath of the population at large. Elaborate welfare arrangements and benefits were put in place to insure that families did not suffer while their principal breadwinner was away on military service. More important, occupied Eastern Europe was subjected to a ruthless policy of exploitation and expropriation, in which foodstuffs were seized in vast quantities from the granaries of the Ukraine to feed the population at home, while more than 3.5 million Soviet prisoners of war were deliberately left to die of disease and starvation, and German war plans envisaged up to 30 million or in some versions 50 million Slavic civilians perishing in the same way. A similar policy was put into effect as soon as the German Army occupied Greece, with huge quantities of food being shipped home while Athens succumbed to a famine of terrible dimensions.

In 1941 Nazi planners urged the incorporation of "Russia's food economy into the European framework," leading to the "extinction" of "large segments of the population," running into "tens of millions." Aly cites many similar documents. German historian Christian Gerlach in particular has argued that the extermination of the region's Jews was hastened by the desire of German administrators to reduce the number of "useless mouths" in a situation where the German armed forces had to live off the land and food supplies at home constantly needed to be replenished from abroad. For Aly, indeed, a major reason for Hitler's decision to deport the remaining Jews in Berlin to the east in the summer of 1941 was the need to use their homes to house Germans made homeless by Allied bombing raids.

Here, however, a fundamental weakness of Aly's approach becomes apparent. In all his work, including his earlier study *"Final Solution"*, he has applied a kind of economic reductionism that leaves other factors too much out of account—notably ideology and belief. His arguments are always stimulating and deserve the closest consideration, but they by no means tell the whole story, and they considerably exaggerate the impact of material factors on Nazi decision-making, which was fundamentally irrational at its core.

In a series of complex calculations, Aly comes to the conclusion that no less than 70 percent of the wartime revenues of the German Reich derived from occupied countries, from forced labor and from the murder of nearly 6 million of Europe's Jews (whose assets and possessions fell to the Reich once they were killed). One could make a case that Aly actually underestimates the amount of plunder extracted from the occupied countries, since he relies overwhelmingly on official documents and ignores the vast scale of the unofficial looting carried out by German soldiers as they marched into one country after another. Heinrich Böll described with disapproval how his fellow soldiers broke into deserted houses on their way into France, taking anything they wanted; and in Poland and the East, the troops stole food, jewelry, silver and gold, artworks of every description and much else besides from the country houses and monasteries they encountered on their victorious march toward Warsaw. The contribution all this made to the standard of living of the sol-

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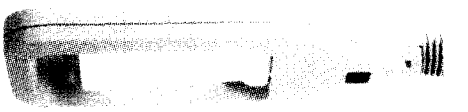

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diers' families back home should not be underestimated, even if it is impossible to calculate.

But overall, Aly's figure is surely anything but an underestimate. Other calculations, notably by Adam Tooze in his forthcoming history of the Nazi economy, *Wages of Destruction* (to be published by Viking in April) put the figure more plausibly at around 25 percent; still substantial, but a long way from keeping almost the entire German people going, as Aly claims. Aly has relatively little in qualitative terms to say about the standard of living of Germans on the home front, and citing government social policy measures is no substitute. There can be little doubt that a deterioration in general living standards set in relatively early, as rations were steadily cut; people began to have recourse to the black market, where prices rapidly became inflated; and bombing raids from 1941 onward began to have their effect.

There is, moreover, a fundamental contradiction at the core of Aly's book. For if the overwhelming mass of Germans had been as positively committed to the Third Reich as he claims they were already before 1939, sustaining an "accommodating dictatorship" from below and participating fully in a flat decision-making process, then why would the regime have felt it necessary to divert such enormous resources into trying to avoid discontent on the home front during the war? Ironically, too, the decision-making processes that Aly describes, from tax reform and welfare measures to the regulation of food parcels and the raising of soldiers' wages, originated with central figures and institutions in the regime, including Hitler and Göring themselves, and were implemented in a top-down fashion through the Finance Ministry. If the Nazi leaders had decided not to tolerate the plundering of occupied countries and stopped the troops from enriching themselves and their families, they could have done so, and things surely would have turned out differently.

A central feature of Nazi ideology and rhetoric, explored by many historians but for obvious reasons completely ignored by Aly, was the cult of self-sacrifice, the appeal to self-surrender in the interests of nation and race. Much of this was coupled with promises that everything would get better once the war was over, but it also had a clear message for the present. Germany was everything, the individual nothing. Goebbels's propaganda machine constantly exhorted Germans to live frugally so that resources could be focused on financing the war. There is plenty of evidence that the deep-seated identification of a majority of Germans with the nation—their nationalism, in a word—was more important than anything else in maintaining their commitment to the war effort.

In 1939, 1940 and 1941, this produced an almost hysterical euphoria, as with startling rapidity and ease German forces overran territories whose conquest had largely eluded them in 1914–18. From 1942 to near the end of the war, coupled with growing and in many respects quite justified fear of the Red Army, it instilled a grim determination to preserve the nation in the face of its advancing enemies. At the same time, disillusion with the Nazi regime escalated rapidly in 1942–43, until by 1944 even Hitler was coming under increasing criticism from the populace, and the regular morale reports produced by the Security Service of the SS had to be stopped because they made too depressing reading.

When the Red Army finally overran Berlin, and Hitler committed suicide in his bunker, any remaining allegiance to his regime among the overwhelming majority of ordinary Germans collapsed. There can be little doubt that the material conditions of their life deteriorated sharply in 1945–47, now that the income and produce of occupied countries was no longer available to them, the country's huge arms and munitions industries ceased to exist, the armed forces were demobilized and returned home to begin the difficult search for a job, millions of refugees and expellees flooded in from Eastern Europe, and the burgeoning black market fueled inflation until it reached dangerous levels. Yet despite these appallingly difficult material conditions, there was no resistance to the Allied occupation, and no serious attempt to revive National Socialism after its defeat. If material factors had been so central in creating Germans' loyalty to the Third Reich, one would have expected far more serious levels of discontent after it collapsed. As it was, the death of Hitler, the central, integrating figure of Nazism, had cut the bonds of people's allegiance to his movement. And a regime that had constantly insisted that might was right, and that the spoils went to the strong, was now unambiguously hoist by its own petard.

It was not just the end of the good times, economically speaking, therefore, that tore people's allegiance away from the principles and practices of National Socialism, important though that was. Ideology, as always, was just as important, if not more so. Götz Aly has once more done a service to our understanding of Nazi Germany by drawing our attention to material factors, but as in much of his previous work, he has exaggerated their significance, and to concentrate on them alone is to show only half the picture. ■

Faraway, So Close

OMER BARTOV

FIVE GERMANYS I HAVE KNOWN. By Fritz Stern. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 546 pp. $30.

In 1995 Fritz Stern was asked to replace Richard Holbrooke as keynote speaker at the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the Leo Baeck Institute in New York, since the latter was leading the American team negotiating the Bosnian Peace Accords in Dayton, Ohio. Praising Holbrooke's diplomatic abilities, Stern writes, he "indulged in a historical fantasy" that had Holbrooke been around in July 1914, he might have singlehandedly prevented the outbreak of World War I. "In which case neither he nor his Hungarian-born wife nor I would be here in the United States."

This, in a certain sense, is the gist of Stern's hefty new book: part memoir, part extended rumination on German history, part coming to terms with German-Jewish relations and his own involvement in that saga. For Stern and his family were the very embodiment of German-Jewish integration before it ended in expulsion and mass murder—members of a once glorious community who avoided death only by fleeing the country that so cruelly betrayed them. *Five Germanys I Have Known* is also a tale of encounters with the men and women who shaped Germany's destiny in the twentieth century or were doomed by the course

Omer Bartov is the John P. Birkelund Distinguished Professor of European History at Brown University. Princeton will publish his Erased: Vanishing Traces of Jewish Galicia in Present-Day Ukraine *in September.*

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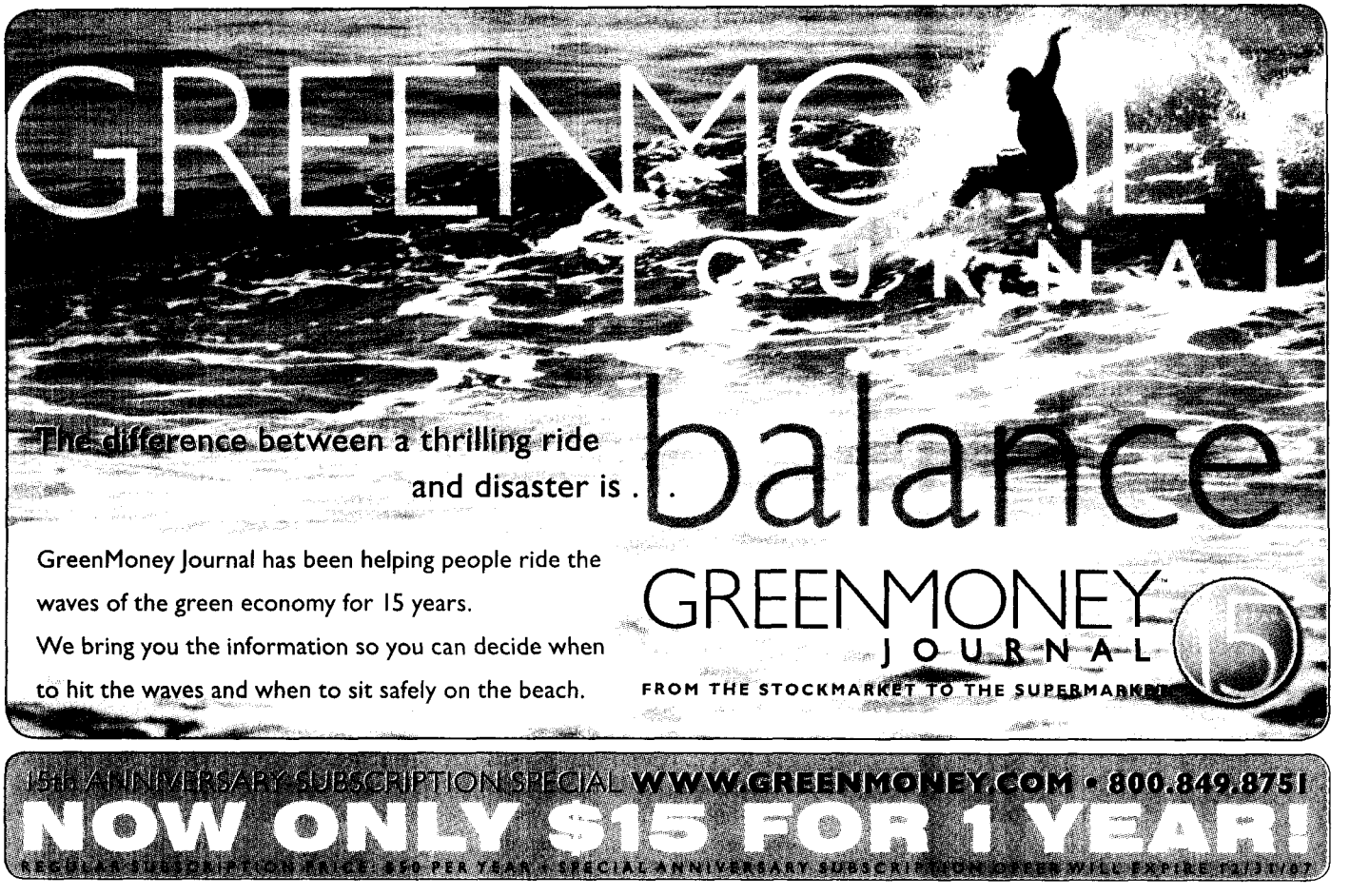
it took. It tells the story of one man's triumph and of one land's resurrection. But it contains a melancholy strain, a memory of all that was lost and will never be given the second chance afforded Stern and his German homeland.

University Professor Emeritus and former provost at Columbia University, Stern has been a major figure among historians of modern Germany for many decades. His first monograph, *The Politics of Cultural Despair* (1961), was an influential study of the cultural roots of Nazism in imperial and Weimar Germany. While examining what he termed German illiberalism and the complex relationship between German and Jewish elites—analyzed in his book *Gold and Iron*, on Bismarck and his Jewish banker Bleichröder—Stern has also taken part in some major scholarly/political controversies in the Federal Republic in the role of an insider-outsider, starting with the debate in the 1960s and '70s over Fritz Fischer's controversial books on Germany's role in the outbreak of World War I and the continuities between German imperial and Nazi policies.

This status of one who knows Germany inside out, because he was born and raised there, yet is also an outside observer, having spent most of his life studying it in the United States, is particularly complex in Stern's case. For he is a Jew from a family of converts to Christianity, although he practices neither religion. In one sense, this would seem to make Stern, who is 80 years old, a member of the new globalized humanity—postreligious, cosmopolitan, free of tribal loyalties. In another, more accurate sense, Stern embodies the tragedy of his generation of assimilated Jews, who were forced back into the identity they imagined they had escaped or transcended, as they were expelled from the nation they had so fervently adopted. It was under duress that Stern became a patriotic American and a Jew (without ever reconverting). And he chose an extra-European identity, tinged with a strong but highly ambivalent connection to Germany.

Here is one irony: In his recent and contentious autobiography, *Peeling the Onion*, celebrated German author Günter Grass not only admitted that he had served in the Waffen SS but added, only partly tongue-in-cheek, that by the time he had joined Himmler's Black Corps, it was so infused with volunteers from all lands of the Continent that it virtually had become a European army. Thus Grass became a European by joining the most notorious murder squad of the twentieth century. Conversely, Stern became a European with his last-minute escape from Germany, merely a few weeks before *Kristallnacht* finally shattered the illusions of even the most ardent German-Jewish patriots.

In Laurence Sterne's *Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy*, the narrator famously fails to be born until the end of the novel. Fritz Stern's *Five Germanys I Have Known* contains a great deal about his life, much of it intriguing, especially for those interested in German-American relations and the vicissitudes of academic life. But the first 130 pages of the book are a real gem, even if many of the incidents recounted predate the author's birth. While researching his book, Stern discovered a trove of letters and other documents belonging to family members. Although he devoted much of his scholarly career to writing about imperial Germany, Stern never used his family's records for this purpose. As it turns out, the story of his ancestors is in many ways a microcosm of the universe he had always tried to reconstruct. And because it provides such an intimate, detailed and multifaceted portrait, it adds immeasurably to our understanding of those generations of rapidly assimilating Jews before and after the Great War.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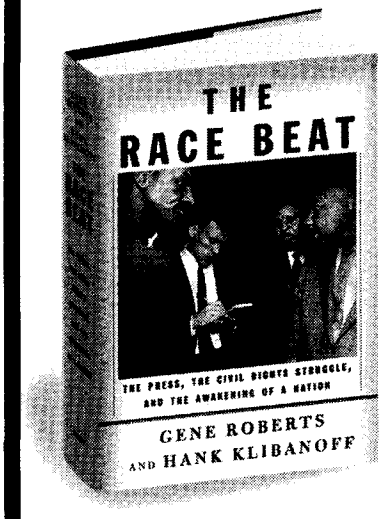

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Stern, who was born in 1926, came from a family of doctors and converts. But while he was baptized at birth and raised as a Christian, his account makes it clear that his family's social circle consisted mainly of Jews and Jewish converts to Christianity. The Sterns and their friends were ambitious professionally and deeply immersed in bourgeois German culture; their milieu stood outside both its Jewish origins and its Gentile environment, forming, at least temporarily, a group unto itself. This could have been only a moment of transition; things might have looked very different had the Nazis not arrived on the scene. But arrive they did, and as Stern demonstrates in minute and moving detail, they hardly landed from the moon. Rather, the Nazis were part and parcel of society, and certainly of his hometown Breslau (now Wroclaw), where they were more heavily represented than in the country at large.

Stern's father fought as a young man in World War I. Passionately dedicated to the Kaiser's cause at the beginning of the war, Rudolf Stern rose to the rank of officer, barred to Jews before the war. By the time he returned from the front, he was a decorated but disillusioned veteran, embittered by the useless sacrifice, the false hopes. As anti-Semitism spread in the Weimar Republic, Stern's father prospered in medicine but could not avoid exposure to the malignant transformation of society. Stern recounts an especially telling episode in which his father "witnessed a bizarre prelude to what was to come: In the medical auditorium in Breslau, while the case of a psychotic patient was being demonstrated, the patient suddenly began a nationalistic harangue full of violent outbursts against Jews and other criminals—and the assembled students and some of the doctors began applauding."

Following the Nazi seizure of state power in 1933, Stern's parents immediately began seeking options for emigration. And yet, despite many trips outside Germany and several offers, they remained in the country and city they loved almost until the last possible moment. In this too they resembled many of their generation. As Stern writes,

> I have often wondered why my parents reached their decision so dangerously late. They had been among the first to recognize the need to emigrate, in the spring of 1933.... Inwardly my parents may have been torn, and the disappointments [with failed attempts to find positions elsewhere] may have had their depressing effect. It is desperately hard to leave all that is familiar to you for something so uncertain as to start a new life, penniless, in an utterly foreign country and language.

This is an important insight. When we blame those who did not leave despite "the writing on the wall," we refuse to consider how difficult it was to uproot oneself, and how unknown the future was, both in Germany and in other lands. For children like Stern, this was another matter. He was increasingly eager to leave behind all the hatred and prejudice and humiliation. In class, his math teacher, Herr Müth, presented the students with the following problem: "If three Jews robbed a bank, and each got a part of the loot proportionate to their ages...how much would each get?" To Stern, it was clear that he had no place in Germany and that his prospects lay elsewhere.

Yet Stern never entirely left Germany, which he continued to revisit in his writing and in his professional life. Indeed, he drew increasingly on those early years in the land he had left with much anger and bitterness. As he explains, his family's "narrow escape" made it possible for him to preserve a space for other, less hostile feelings: "A mere six weeks more in Germany," he writes, "and this [the November 1938 pogrom] could, this would, have happened to us. And if I had seen my father mistreated and then carried off, if I had lived through weeks or months of uncertainty and of my mother's desperate efforts to obtain his release, if I had found him a changed person, physically abused and psychically humiliated—had I lived through that experience, it would have poisoned me forever against all things German, inured me against contacts with any subsequent Germany."

This thought seems to have remained with Stern throughout the intervening years. In 1991, when he visited the Buchenwald concentration camp, to which his father would have been taken had they still been in Germany during *Kristallnacht*, he conceded that if his father "had had to endure this horror, my own life vis-à-vis the German past would have been unalterably different." From this perspective, Stern seems to have contained within himself two options, two attitudes: one that he chose and one that he might have chosen. Yet the attitude he chose, that of opening up to Germany after the war—indeed, of being the scholarly representative of the United States in Germany and the scholarly representative of Germany in the United States par excellence—was, as he repeatedly admits, a mere coincidence, the product of

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circumstances that whisked him away from the horror moments before it struck.

Stern's luck engendered ambivalence, one that is multiplied by the ambivalence of his identity. For here too, what he is and how he sees himself are both a product of choice and of circumstances entirely out of his control. In a moment of introspection he writes: "The thought that Hitler had made me a Jew, annulling the commitments my grandparents had made to Christianity, seemed intolerable, even as I realized that it had been National Socialism that had made me feel my Jewish kinship.... As I write this...I have not a scintilla of doubt that I am an American and a Jew." But in December 1939, when his grandmother, who had remained Jewish but whom he calls "the most genuinely 'Christian' of my forbears," died, he writes that he sat with his father for a Jewish funeral service at the Riverside Memorial Chapel. Then he adds: "Christmas was sad and subdued."

This ambivalence is, of course, not only Stern's but that of his environment. Upon meeting Pope John Paul II in 1987, Stern remarks on the growing presence of bright Asian students at American universities, adding that "they have taken the place of the Jews." The Pope, possibly unaware of Stern's heritage, replies, "Yes, but they [Jews] still control the media and finance." Mostly, however, it is the other way around. For Stern says that while he sometimes felt "embarrassed, even uncomfortable, about belonging to the minority of Jews whose families had converted," he "was not attuned to organized religion of any kind, so I never thought of 'unconverting.'" He concludes, "In any case, most people assumed I was Jewish: why else would my family have fled Germany? Oddly, in both postwar Germany and the United States, people didn't realize there was a category of 'Jewish' Christians." And while he writes that he "encountered subterranean anti-Semitism in America," Stern insists that "the occasional taunt made by American Jews about my having been born into a converted family hurt more."

Possibly, however, what hurt Stern most were the responses in some of the German media to his speech at the German Bundestag in 1987, a mere two years before the fall of the Berlin wall. Stern had suggested that the workers' uprising in East Germany in 1953 was not in support of reunification but in demand for a better life within the existing Socialist state; he also noted that an undivided (in other words, united) Germany had brought immense suffering to Germans and to the rest of the world. What appalled Stern was that both supporters

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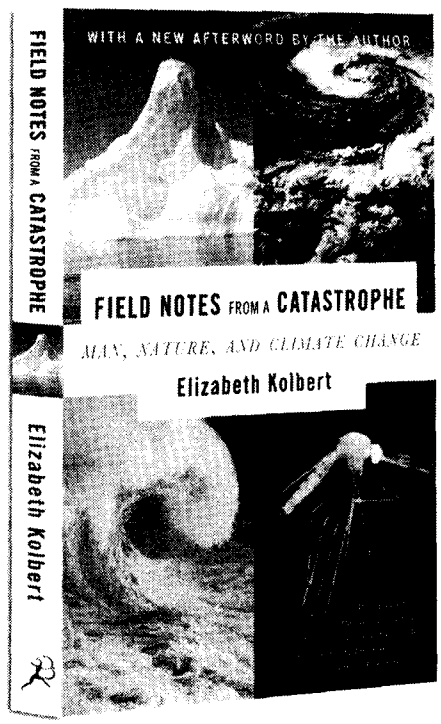
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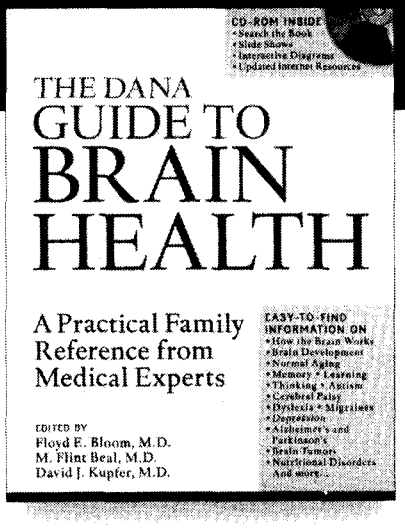

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and detractors of his speech referred to him repeatedly as an American historian, a refugee from Germany and a Jew, suggesting perhaps "how unassimilable the question of Jewishness remained."

Stern ends his book on an optimistic note. Despite all the pains of German reunification, he believes that his first homeland has been given a second chance, and he clearly hopes that it will make the most of this opportunity. He has also found his own second chance in a second and very happy marriage. But one must wonder whether this impressively sunny view of the future from a man whose life spans much of a century of war and destruction conceals a darker, more pessimistic, melancholy streak. For the milieu from which Stern came, that generation full of hope and promise of Jews both baptized and not, was totally eradicated. Many were killed by the Nazis. Of those who escaped, many of the older ones lived half-lives, having left all that they loved behind and been compelled to rebuild from scratch, always missing the world that spat them out and never entirely recovering from the betrayal. Among the younger generation that includes Stern, this ambivalence seems only to have grown over the years. One could say, as he proposes, that it made for a more European or cosmopolitan outlook, and it surely did. But it also left a festering if not always acknowledged wound, a desire to be accepted by those who will never see you as their own, and a certain alienation from those who had taken you in. And this sounds remarkably like the Jews of Germany at the turn of the previous century. ■

THEATER

Kids

JUDITH LEVINE

SPRING AWAKENING

After a Saturday matinee during the Off Broadway run at the Atlantic Theater in July, the audience was "talking back" about the sexual politics of Frank Wedekind's *Spring Awakening*. The play—now at the Eugene O'Neill Theater on West 49th Street—concerns the calamitous consequences of adult-enforced silence and shame on a group of provincial German teenagers first discovering their sexual desires. Wendla dies during an abortion. Moritz shoots himself when he fails his final exams. And Melchior—the sort of boy who excels in the classroom while gleaning the glamour of rebelling against all he's being taught—survives, but only after punishment and grief have taken their toll.

The audience was congratulating itself on its sophistication. "You couldn't stage this in Dubuque," one gentleman sniffed. He wasn't far off. As recently as 1991, Boise's Idaho Shakespeare Festival canceled *Spring Awakening* over a nude scene the director refused to excise. No gratuitous nudity here, but Michael Mayer's straightahead direction of masturbation, sadomasochism and homosexuality, Steven Sater's sometimes profane poetry to Duncan Sheik's punkish—and loud—music and the angular, moshlike choreography of Bill T. Jones recharge the discomfort, even shock, the piece evoked at its first performances.

Such anxiety isn't exclusive to the boonies or the bad old days, though. That afternoon, a woman asked of the guests onstage, "Do you think this play is appropriate for minors?" On the website broadwaybox.com viewers raved, but all but one recommended the play for Adults Only. A curious attitude, given that Wedekind's protagonists are 14 years old.

Spring Awakening is like adolescent sex itself: It mirrors each era's terrors and hopes, its ideas of childhood and maturity, innocence and evil. Instantly banned from the stage on publication in 1891, it was not performed until 1906. Then, Max Reinhardt's striking production received a lengthy run and attracted, along with *geshreis* from the predictably scandalized, the adulation of critics from Thomas

Judith Levine is the author of four books, including Harmful to Minors: The Perils of Protecting Children From Sex.

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Mann to Leon Trotsky, who otherwise had no use for Wedekind's "social nihilism" and "erotic aesthetic." But the text was always served up sliced and diced.

The first American English-language production, in 1917, was smuggled onstage under cover of health promotion. The sponsor was the *Medical Review of Reviews*, a publication of an organization of progressive New York doctors and reformers. But the censors shut it down anyway, on the grounds that some minors might sneak past the ticket-takers, depriving parents of the opportunity to introduce them to sex through a "less turgid channel of education." In 1964 the British National Theatre's literary manager, drama critic Kenneth Tynan, battled the Lord Chamberlain over two scenes the censor wanted excised. Tynan and the censor reached some compromises, but the theater's own board nevertheless banned the play. "Board censorship intolerable," director John Dexter telegrammed, and offered his resignation. As late as 1973, a British scholar complained that "current editions still...rather prudishly only give the initial letters of 'Penis' and 'Vagina.'"

Spring Awakening was finally staged uncut in English in 1974. History had prepared the ground—this was the height of the sexual revolution—but it muffled the play's landing. London's critics generally admired Edward Bond's faithful, elegant translation. But they met the play's sexual shenanigans with a general ho-hum. One reviewer suggested that Wedekind, "a powerful ironist [and] acute psychologist," employed "the sexual taboo as a symbol for other forms of repression," such as paternalistic religion. Writing in the *Soho Weekly News* in 1978, of a Public Theater staging, Gerald Rabkin made a similar observation. He credited Wedekind with no less than creating "the model of a youth culture, adolescence as a distinctly defined, victimized class," then wondered if it "was almost too influential": The play suffered "the inevitable fate of innovation: it seems old hat."

This hat wasn't quite ready for mothballs, though. A misreading of the same production foreshadowed the culture wars that would reawaken *Spring Awakening* to controversy. "As much as the play reflects on its own time," wrote the *New York Voice*'s Marjorie Gunner, "it also points to its opposite, today's total freedom, exchanging loss of innocence for loss of values." (To Wedekind, sexual freedom was a positive value, almost synonymous with uto-

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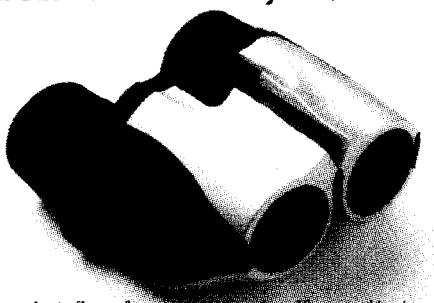

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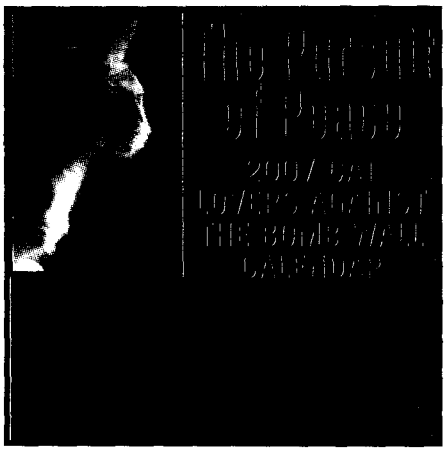

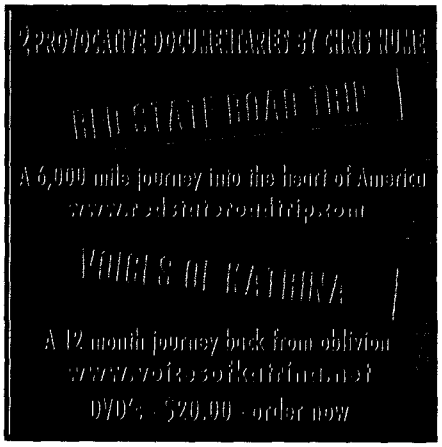

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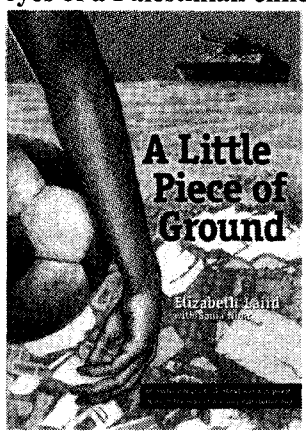

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pian innocence. "The body," he wrote, "has its own morality.")

Soon, silence would again equal death. AIDS, a *Guardian* reviewer declared in 1986, invested *Spring Awakening* "with a new potency." Six years later, the *Evening Standard* warned that the Christian right was promoting the same program as the benighted parents and teachers in the play, making it "essential viewing."

But the same politics that perennially revive *Spring Awakening* can also bury it. Back in Boise, the members of the Shakespeare Festival board were not simply prudes. A city statute prohibited public nudity in a venue that sold alcoholic beverages, which the festival did. The Cincinnati Contemporary Arts Center's costly, bruising fight over its Mapplethorpe exhibition had ended only a year earlier. Arts administrators nationwide feared that risky work could put them under.

Through it all, *Spring Awakening* has never failed to inspire a passionate cheerleading section of sex-ed advocates. Emma Goldman condemned detractors who "could see naught in Wedekind except a base, perverted, almost diabolical nature." Rather, the anarchist feminist discerned "a sensitive soul, deeply stirred by the... misery and torture of the child...sacrificed on the altar of stupidity and convention which taboo [his] enlightenment...on questions of such elemental importance to health and well-being." The Berlin judge who rescinded the ban did so on the basis of similar reasoning, minus the "stupidity and convention": He deemed the work respectable not because of artistic merit but because "it deals with serious educational issues." That verdict, "not guilty by virtue of edification," has buoyed—or cumbered—*Spring Awakening* to this day. In a recent interview for Planned Parenthood's *Choice* magazine, a reporter commented to producer Tom Hulce, "In a lot of ways, the teens in the play could have used Planned Parenthood, particularly the education [it] provides around sexual decision-making and prevention."

Benjamin Franklin Wedekind was neither pornographer nor polemicist. He was a dramatic revolutionary who threw over bathetic Neo-Romanticism and plodding Realism, which he disdained as glorified stenography; its writers, one of his characters notes, would in the future "earn their living as members of the secret police." His fragmented narratives and caroming subjectivities presaged Expressionism and the Theater of the Absurd. Brecht worshiped, and imitated, him.

Like his work, and his era—martial, imperialist Germany, where a radical artistic and sexual counterculture flourished—Wedekind was a man of prodigious political and sexual contradiction.

Born in 1864 to erstwhile expatriates who never firmly established their son's citizenship, he was a naturalized cosmopolitan. Yet this lifelong leftist and pacifist, once jailed for *lèse-majesté*, later mystified and enraged his friends by delivering a widely circulated speech glorifying the Fatherland.

He embraced the margins, befriending circus acrobats, clowns and strongmen, who throughout his *oeuvre* symbolize daring, eccentricity and wild humor, as well as "elasticity," a joyfully free balance of spirit and body that described his ideal of sexuality. In Paris, Zurich and Munich, he delighted the bohemian with art forms from bird imitation to lute songs and appalled the bourgeois with performances featuring onstage urination and masturbation. Censorship demoralized and impoverished him, but it also secured his reputation for innovation and integrity. *Spring Awakening* and, later, the *Lulu* plays (from whence came the Berg opera and Pabst film) made him famous—but acclaim seemed to dull him. Trotsky sarcastically sympathized. "That is the tragedy of success," he wrote. "It shows the author that people are no longer afraid of him." As if to re-establish his street cred, in 1910 Wedekind wrote *Schloss Wetterstein*, a theatrical precursor of the snuff film, which disgusted supporters and foes alike. Finally accepted by the bourgeoisie, he needed to remain the *épateur*.

Sex was Wedekind's subject, his cause and his vexation, and the vexation of his interpreters. An acute critic of the economic and sexual exploitation of women, he nonetheless scorned the feminist movement, and his diaries are a compendium of assignations with prostitutes. He fancied himself a satyr, yet he was plagued by impotence. One striking exception was a three-day one-man orgy involving a vision inspired by Krafft-Ebbing, of prepubescent girls walking on their hands, catching bills between their legs, taking "kindly encouragement" from "a slender switch," then bedding down with the family dogs. He mused about a similar regime to "educate" his own future daughters. Yet *Spring Awakening* is as sensitive a cry for children's sexual rights as any in history.

He detested conventional marriage, as modeled by an authoritarian father who

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married a beautiful, free-spirited singer half his age, then made her relinquish her career and moved the family to a remote Swiss hillside. Yet Wedekind married the beautiful, free-spirited actress Tilly Newes, also half his age, then forbade her to take the stage with anyone but him. He fathered a baby with Strindberg's wife, and according to Tilly was uninterested in marital sex, yet he tormented her with unwarranted jealousy.

In his work, women are masochistic and cruel, victims and *femmes fatales*—sometimes, like Lulu, all of the above. His "elasticity," though an androgynous utopian ideal, was a feminine attribute, incompatible with the single-minded aggression of masculine sexuality, argues Gerald Izenberg in *Modernism and Masculinity*. This created a problem not only for the intimate Wedekind but for his characters as well. In *Spring Awakening*, writes German drama scholar Elizabeth Boa, "Moritz, a 'feminine' type weighed down by his father's demands, likes to imagine the greater pleasure girls must feel in their passivity during sexual intercourse as they are forced to submit to what is wrong, and finally punishes himself in a grim coalescence of masculine sadism and feminine masochism."

Wedekind was ahead of his time and of it, a sex radical but never a gender radical.

Today, the notion that children are harmed by sex, and even images of sex, is virtually unchallenged in American culture. Sex law obliterates the meaning of the word "child": The definition includes everyone from infants to college freshmen, and penalties for breaching the boundary are draconian. Michael Mayer labored for six years to find *Spring Awakening* a home. One of his producers worried that young actors simulating sex onstage might get them all arrested on child-porn charges. And an educated theatergoer wondered whether a rock musical about teen sex was OK for minors to see.

Without introducing anachronism, Sater and Mayer excise some of *Spring Awakening*'s hoarier gender formulations. In the original, only the boys are horny. Most disturbing, Melchior rapes Wendla. Now that interaction is more ambiguous. Melchior caresses Wendla, and while struggling and crying "No" she has an orgasm. As the pivotal character, Mayer told me, Melchior had to be sympathetic. So, where Wedekind wrote him as dogmatically opposed to love, here he is smitten. "You have to honor the period," Mayer said, "but we wanted to show it's possible for

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kids to have an intimate experience together that isn't just hurtful. And girls can have desire, as inchoate as it may be."

These collaborators have considerably brightened the mood of Wedekind's play. Yet, as in the original, the humor is sardonic, and sadomasochism threads the narrative. The courtship of Melchior and Wendla begins with singing: "O, I'm gonna be wounded; O, I'm gonna be your wound./O, I'm gonna bruise you; O, you're gonna be my bruise." Later, the lyric becomes literal. Revealing, with a kind of eroticized horror, that their friend Martha is beaten by her father, Wendla begs Melchior to cane her with a switch: "I've never felt...anything!" she implores, eliciting in him an unexpected violence. The wound song is reprised by a gay boy warning, while moving in on, his prey. And the writers add a new scene of sexualized humiliation.

The source of the characters' pain, though, is not only Victorian repression. Indeed, among the greatest virtue of this *Spring Awakening* is its rendering of the perversity at the heart of teen sexuality. After all, the unhappy ending defines teen romance. No less than the desire for a transporting pleasure, Wedekind's adolescents are compelled by the voluptuous anticipation of sadness.

Although Wedekind had written that *Spring Awakening* was meant to indict sexual hypocrisy, by 1911 its reception as a "problem play" irked him. Never mind the subtitle, "A Tragedy of Childhood"; the play, he declared, was a comedy. Playwright and drama critic Eric Bentley observed that audiences looking for the "message" miss both the comedy, stemming from "Wedekind's lively sense of Eros," and the tragedy, from his "equally powerful sense of the ubiquity and inevitability of (premature) death." Mayer and Sater preserve both. And for all its exuberant humor, even sweetness, *Spring Awakening* never suggests that sex education or good parenting would render sex wholesome, easy or free of the gnarled pleasures of pain. The war between and simultaneous collusion of Eros and Thanatos endure.

As if by contagion, Broadway tends to banalize almost anything challenging that makes it above 42nd Street. But I don't think that will happen to *Spring Awakening*. Sater, Mayer, Sheik and Jones have given us the play not just exhilaratingly new. They have given us Wedekind true: tough, brave, enduringly radical. ■

LETTERS
CONTINUED

(Continued From Page 2)

of people who have committed suicide precisely because of harassment by microcredit groups.

Last March the press in Andhra Pradesh reported that its government was contemplating "severe action" against some MFIs because they were charging exorbitant interest rates and harassing the local population. They "have become worse than moneylenders," was the terse description of AP's chief minister, Rajasekhara Reddy. He went on: "We were told that these MFIs are charging exorbitant interest rates of 15 per cent to 20 per cent flat, amounting to 30-40 per cent interest. They are said to be resorting to highly unethical recovery measures." One of his colleagues appealed to the commercial banks to deliver rural women from the predations of the microfinanciers.

Many of the self-help groups that practice this microcredit are now being used by banks as loan recovery squads. In Kerala it's led to clashes. A few weeks ago, the Reserve Bank of India cheerfully and explicitly called for such groups to be used in bill collection and loan recovery. Imagine the social tensions and clashes the microfinanciers are setting up in a village when your neighbor pries into your house for debt recovery. It's already happened.

Microloans do not pay off the kind of debts that farming runs up. The average microloan in Andhra Pradesh does not equal the cost of cultivation of one acre of cotton anywhere in that state. Nor does it equal a tenth of the cost of one acre of land in most of these places.

The "decent buffalo" invoked by NGO bureaucrat Nandita Sen comes at indecent prices. Right now in the state of Maharashtra, plagued with a hideous wave of farmer suicides, cows and buffaloes under the government program are selling for more than 15,000 rupees (about $350). Even if these cows are highly subsidized, the farmer still has to pay at least 5,500 rupees. But it's not just a matter of the initial price of the beast. If Sen looked up from grant applications and asked a starving farmer about that decent buffalo, the farmer would say that people are desperate to return animals that are eating more than their families. Cows cost between 120 and 150 rupees a day in feed, more than twice the minimum wage under India's rural employment guarantee program for human beings. And much of the government's activity on this cow front was slated to run through self-help groups, who then gouge the farmer for the repayment with interest. It's a racket.

The hype about Grameen itself comes in zeppelin-sized increments. The late Daniel Pearl and Michael Phillipps did a long piece on the Grameen Bank in the *Wall Street Journal* a few years ago that poked a pretty sharp stick through the balloon, on such substantive matters as loan repayment rates and debtor dissatisfaction. To say it once more: Microloans have helped. As a tool for bettering the long-term situation of the rural poor, they're a dud.

ALEXANDER COCKBURN

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***NATION* STUDENT OUTREACH:** Attention student activists! If you're involved in organizing a progressive event, lecture or film festival on your campus or in your community and would like to distribute copies of *The Nation*, please let us know by calling (212) 209-5416.

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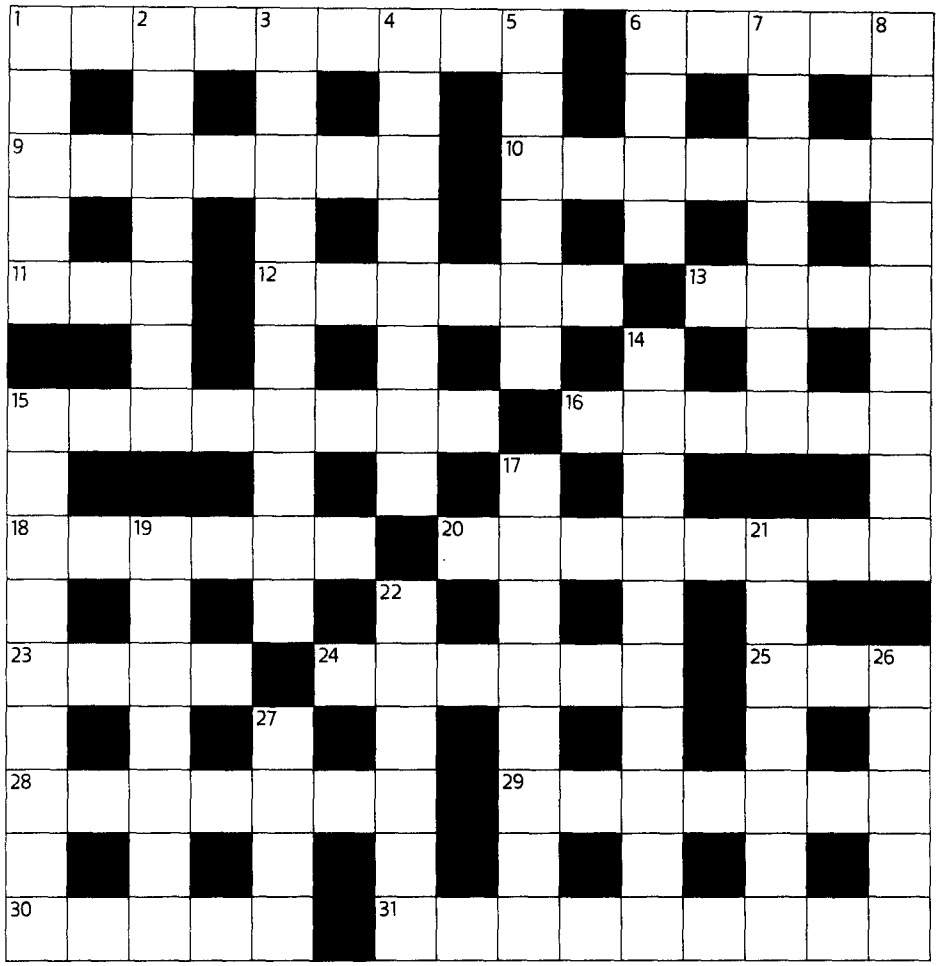

ACROSS

1 and **6** In Gotham, where bankers take a ride? Divers' ire is wild to propel it. (9,5)

9 Give a lifesaver to the worker to make it capable of floating. (7)

10 Supposedly toddlin' town. (7)

11 and **12** So-called circus. (3,3-3)

13 Do you have to shift gear to see what makes an off-street 19 so upset? (4)

15 and **20** A sap for an acronym when there's no space for it. (2,4,2,8)

16 Subdivisions of a family, in general, endless. (6)

18 Primitive ships Dorothy might have sailed in, without moving mountains. (6)

20 See 15

23 Rife with what the assembly might do backward. (4)

24 A visitor who is essential to the folk dance. (6)

25 A place in Switzerland, or the center of Turin... (3)

28 ...a well-remembered place of the French—having that cold stuff on top. (1,2,4)

29 It should slide easily over the water—and a starting point makes it a nice craft. (7)

30 and **27** down No one is excluded this way. (9)

31 Not an underhanded way to get rid of the one who dictates. (9)

DOWN

1 Take something illegally to upset one who does things without thinking. (5)

2 Instrument set incorrectly in the garden, perhaps. (7)

3 No progress can be made with them, but they could be just hunks of stone. (10)

4 Start in to get up with sort of 24 let out—it's basic. (8)

5 Two points to boast about, but your belongings could be held in it. (6)

6 A very uncomplimentary way to refer to a person with a problem in the plumbing. (4)

7 A religious form of government that insists on having a marriage compact. (7)

8 Your former spouse has a single tear to shed, to dispense with the blame. (9)

14 Hydra, so called—the main sort of present given. (3,7)

15 Where some people wear scarves? Some soldiers are ordered to do it. (5,4)

17 Where some shoot from suggests an off-color come-on of a dude—of a good supply of poultry. (4,4)

19 Swear to how old you are, being mean. (7)

21 A fancy place to sleep? (7)

22 Approached being what the patient did after the anesthetic wore off. (4,2)

26 To win, sort of, how your car may be taken. (2,3)

27 See 30 across

PUZZLED? No more cross words. If you don't see why "Lures" are "Ground Rules" send for those of Mr. Lewis to: Puzzled, The Nation, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003, or access our website at www.thenation.com/about/crossword.mhtml.

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 3063

A	S	S	A	S	S	I	N	A	T	I	O	N		
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*Source: "Lighting the Way to Energy Savings" 1999

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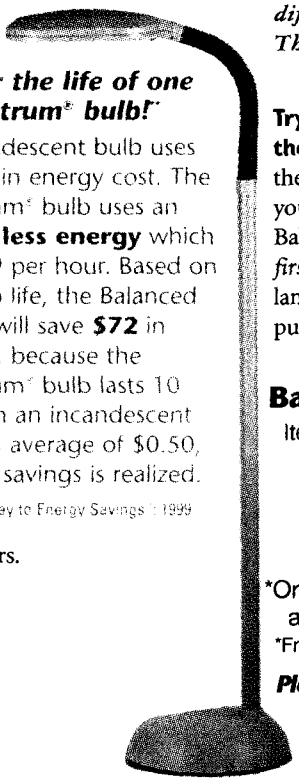

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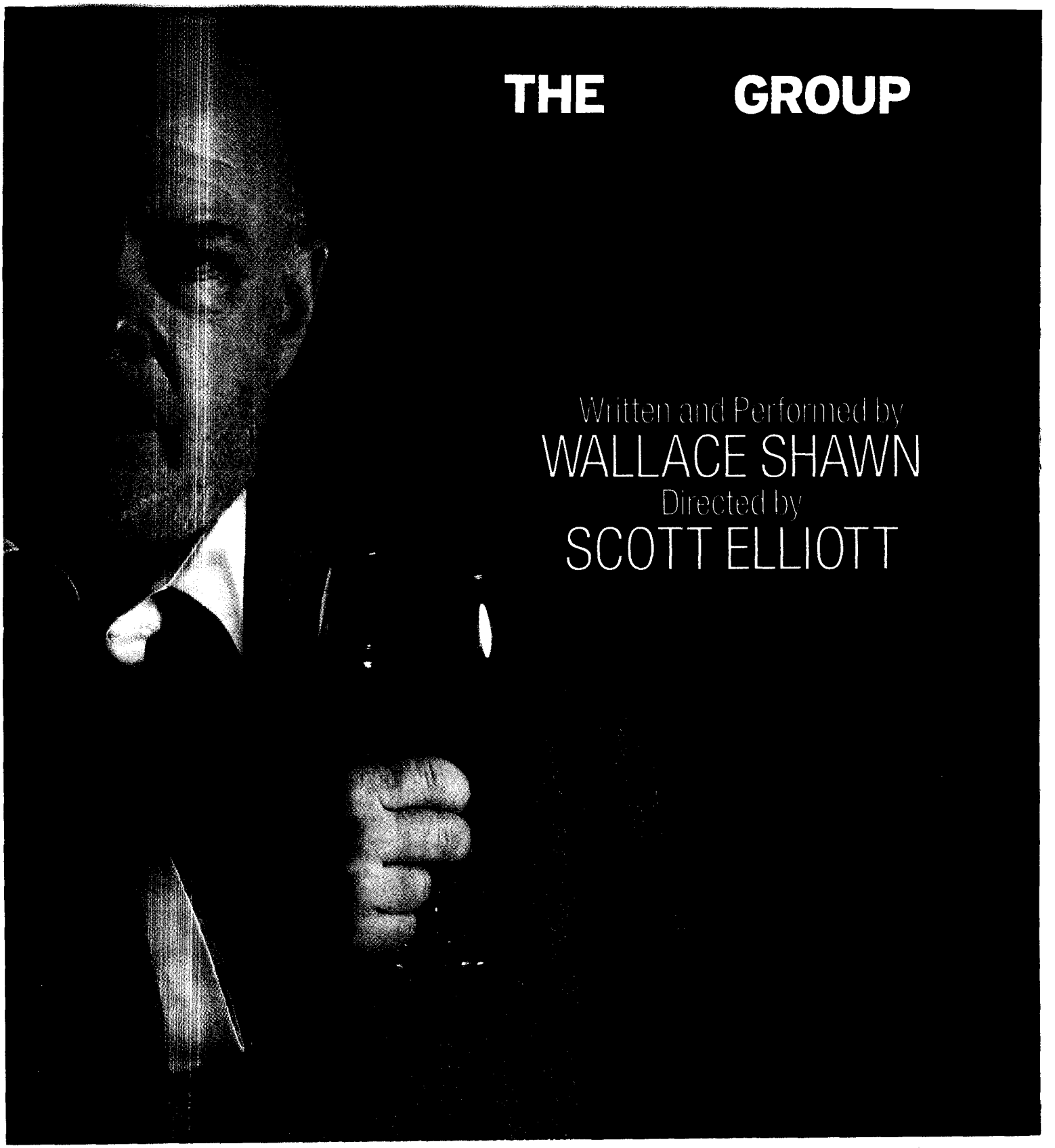

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